GEORGE THE THIRD.

A NOVEL.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

Our lives, discolour'd with our present woes,
May still grow white and smile with happier hours,
So the pure limpid stream, when foul with stains
Of rushing torrents and descending rains,
Works itself clear, and as it runs, refines,
Till by degrees the floating mirror shines;
Reflects each flow'r that on the border grows,
And a new heav'n in its fair bosom shows.

CATO, Act I.

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI MAHAL.

VOL. II.

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CHAP. X.

Composed of more syllables than words.

My reader must be very insensible if I do not now appear in an interesting situation: I am going to hazard all I am worth—life and health—in deference to the opinion of a world, to which it is pretty evident I am not under any very weighty obligations, and in which I can scarcely find food or raiment; and am preparing for the execution of this sage

and salutary and decorous project with infinite gravity; affecting calmness, while a prey to apprehension; and contempt of death, though unable to think of any thing else!

I must honestly confess that during the night I slept but little, and that before the dawn of day I had argued myself out of my anger, and into a perfect conviction of the absurd modes of thinking by which I was influenced. But the first beams of light brought Dyer to my bed side; and his appearance imposed on me an imperious necessity of hiding my real sentiments, and assuming what men term courage.

There are many who will pretend to believe this acknowledgment a degrading proof of my sincerity: a few will be so irrational as actually to be-

lieve that it is; but some there are, who doing neither, will admit that my deportment was conformable to the nature of a human being; and that this confession of my sensations only shows that I am—not a monster—but a man.

That I experienced these alarms will not prove me a coward; that I disguised them, will not constitute me brave. I answered Dyer's summons to rise with alacrity; we hurried to the field; and in a remote part of it, as agreed upon, found Markham and his assistant.

Orlop saluted us both graciously; and having conferred for a minute with Dyer, placed my adversary, who did not *blush*, on his ground, and gave him a pistol; then measuring twelve paces, desired me, if I pleased, to advance, and

take my post: I did so; and receiving a pistol from poor Dyer, who I think, with all his philosophy, trembled as he gave it, I presented at Markham, he doing the like at me: our friends retired to some distance, and one of them calling "fire," we discharged our weapons at the same instant, and without any effect. The moment the smoke was blown off, Orlop stepped briskly up, and said, addressing himself to both of us, "Gentlemen, Mr. Dyer and I are of opinion that this affair has proceeded as far as it should go: Mr. Ardent, have you any objection to desist?" I told him I had none whatever; he put the same question to Markham, and received a similar answer; upon which we exchanged compliments and separated; Dyer and I returning by the way we came.

So much for a duel; in which there was nothing more remarkable than my escaping without being shot through the head. That I did not merit such good-fortune, was probably my protection! At least this solution is agreeable to the general complexion of almost all the accidents of my party-coloured life.

About noon, while alone in my miserable room, brooding over the ills and disappointments I had experienced, and endeavouring to strengthen my mind for those which I foresaw were fast approaching, I was astonished to behold the lieutenant enter. He made excuses for the intrusion, and of his own accord sat down; but even this trivial act he performed in a manner peculiar to the simplicity of his character, and so as to

put my embarrassment to flight. He then addressed me as follows: "I do not mean to offend, and you must forgive the liberty I have taken of tracing you to your apartment, and calling on you without ceremony. My trade is in human blood, and I am, I allow, an Irishman; but I wish to do away an impression you have doubtless received of my being necessarily both a cut-throat and a blunderer. Last night and this morning I acted the part which chance assigned me, and you must confess I did it pretty well; but the jest should not be carried too far: I am now a gentleman. I also consider myself as one in a still more elevated rank —an honest man; and as such, I pay you a compliment in offering you my friendship. I should do this with greater

confidence, did I possess the power of serving you; and perhaps that in some degree may be the case: will you grant me your confidence?"

There was in this a novelty, a boldness, a grace, not to be resisted; and it was less surprising than agreeable to me; for I more than half suspected him of having put on a fictitious demeanour: but I could not comprehend how a man of his superior cast came to be the friend of such a creature as Markham. I therefore in the first instance freely told him as much of myself as was necessary; and then asked him how long he had known my late antagonist. He said; "Not very long, but a sufficient time to convince me that he is unworthy of my esteem: I could not however refuse to take the share I had in this morning's

business; because your violence, justified as it partly was, made reconciliation impossible: and I knew myself well enough to be sure that under my management no mischief would accrue that could be avoided: for you must have observed that what are usually termed serious quarrels, might be easily converted by the friends of the parties into trifles; and where that cannot be done, and a meeting must follow, a timely interference at the place of decision would frequently, if not always, prevent a fatal termination; and serve to soften the barbarous laws of what is absurdly and falsely called honour." Then, having kindly insinuated how much he lamented to see, what he was pleased to compliment as talents of a better order, neglected, he informed me

that, though he was himself unemployed, he had a friend to whom an introduction might be advantageous, and who was going out immediately on board a seventy-four-gun ship, which he commanded, to convoy a fleet of merchantmen to the West Indies, and perhaps to remain for some months on that station; and that although in a king's ship no particular situation could be allotted to me, yet he had reason to believe that Captain Sowerby, the name of the commander, would, when at Jamaica, require the assistance of a person of polite education; having a commission of some importance to execute for government on his arrival: but that at all events, circumstanced as I was, he thought the adventure worth my while. To this he subjoined a few comments on

the temper and habits of Captain Sowerby, which somewhat alarmed, but could not by any means deter me from accepting readily and thankfully his friendly proposal.

It seemed that Sowerby had the reputation of being an excellent officer and a very honest man; but that he was strangely inclined to hold arguments on subjects unconnected with his profession; and notwithstanding his being often in the wrong, was as impatient of contradiction as if he had been in the right: that when he could no longer reason he was used to shout; and failing to overturn the positions of his opponent, was a little apt to overturn the chairs and tables. I laughed at this description; and reckoned on finding some amusement in the imperfections

of the captain, should success attend the application of Mr. Orlop; who, promising to let me hear from him in a day or two, left me for the present to my meditations.

These, as may be easily imagined, turned on the occurrences of the morning, which, with respect to causes and consequences, were of a character that I now began to think appropriated to every action of mine;—a most heinous violation of all laws divine and human, nothing less than an attempt to perpetrate a murder, having procured me a zealous and serviceable friend in the hour of necessity!

In writing to my father, as I did without loss of time, I was cautious not to insist on, or even mention, this and some other pointed refutations of his be-

loved system; but acquainted him generally with the recent change that had taken place in my prospects.

I had scarcely finished my letter when Dyer came in; and on hearing the particulars, wished me joy with unfeigned cordiality; slily observing, that the example of some people was very encouraging; but bidding me also reflect, that it was the *winding up*, not the intermediate parts, which constituted the good or ill fortunes of mankind.

I thought he appeared peculiarly melancholy on his entrance; and supposing him agitated by some money demands which he could not satisfy, or by the apprehension of future want, I began to consider, what in the hurry of my spirits I had overlooked—the extent of my own resources.

These were not absolutely beyond the reach of calculation; and a moderate arithmetician might have cast up the amount without much difficulty. Saving only two shirts, and one pair of stockings, I at the moment carried my entire wardrobe about my person; and of the different articles which composed it I shall only say, that, however the intrinsic value of some things may be enhanced by antiquity, it is not at all favourable to the appearance of a suit of clothes: and, to speak in the handsomest terms I can of my hard cash,—could I have added two shillings to it, it would have made exactly half a crown. This was nevertheless sixpence sterling more than Tom Dyer could boast of, who displaying the linings of his breeches-pockets, proclaimed the state of the ex-

chequer, and declared himself not worth one halfpenny.

He then proceeded to search the different parts of his garments, with the air of one who knows that he cannot find what he pretends to seek; whilst I exclaimed, *Nunc si nos audis atque es divinus Apollo—*

Dic mihi qui nummos non habet unde petat?

When Dyer continued repeating his last words, "not—one—halfpenny; literally nothing; unless this be any thing." I asked what it was, seeing a piece of paper in his hand. "It is," said he, as he delivered it to me, "the sixteenth portion of a lottery ticket, which hitherto I have retained amongst whatever pieces of money I had with me, as a sort of *memento mori* to them. I was fool enough, you must know, to give a

guinea for it a good while ago; and I punish myself by looking at it now and then."—"You have of course," said I, "inquired whether the number was blank or prize."—"No truly, I have not," he replied; "I better know the luck which attends me, and shall entrust that part to you: for myself, it was mortification sufficient to remember, that when I threw away my guinea I was instigated both by the spirit of profusion and avarice. It should to be sure, on that account, and agreeably to your maxim, have been a prize; but really I never asked about it."

We now walked out, determined on taking our customary ramble in the Park; Dyer endeavouring to persuade both himself and me that the practice of dining every day was merely the result

of an effeminate habit, and beneath the dignity of a being whose duty it was to assert the eternal superiority of mind over matter. "Air, sir," said he; "air is the grand specific, if the preservation of existence be your object; and I prove it thus: a man may live three or four days without eating; but without air he expires in as many minutes."

This, I told him, was extremely pleasant logic; especially for those who had no chance of getting a dinner; and a brilliant improvement on his former prescription, by which he graciously gave his followers leave to eat a little every day—if they could. "But with permission," said I, "I shall not become quite so austere as to refrain from this vicious habit until I am forced to it." And at that instant, passing by a lottery-

office, I recollected the share of which I was trustee; I entered, affecting much coolness; and, as indeed I well might, despairing of any other than the *usual* answer, pulled Dyer along with me towards the counter; and placing the paper before a clerk who attended, requested him to tell me the fate of the number it bore. He examined his register, and replied that it was drawn a prize of two thousand pounds.

I shall not say whether my emotions on hearing this proceeded from my affection for Dyer, as Mr. Addison would have said; or from my hopes of participating in his gains, as the Duke de la Rochefoucault would have averred; or, as Fielding (who knew human nature better than either of them) would have contended, from a mixture of both; but

it is certain that "with joy my heart o'erflowed!"

To allow discount, seize our proportion of bank-notes, and scamper back to Dyer's lodging, as being nearest to us, was neither the slowest nor the most disagreeable action of our lives. We reached the apartment breathless with haste and agitation, and locking the door on ourselves, spread the treasure upon a table, and sung *Jubilate* over it. "We are made up," exclaimed the generous Dyer: "you shall divide this with me, Ardent, and go on board like an admiral." I foresaw his liberality, and tried to restrain it, but with little effect: at last I insisted on taking no more than 30*l.* from him; and he acquiesced, on my promising to consider him my banker in case of necessity! Hav-

ing, with many happy sallies on his part, and extravagancies on mine, discussed this miraculous and unhoped-for event, we secured our riches; and I believe I have hardly occasion to add, that afterwards, in lieu of our etherial banquet, we substituted a choice piece of sublunary roast beef, and a joyous bottle of mortal old port.

In two days Orlop called, and acquainting me that Captain Sowerby had returned him thanks for the proposal he had made in my behalf, desired me to accompany him to an hotel in Brook Street, where that gentleman would receive us; and on the way pressed me, in the most obliging manner, to make use of his credit in the city for the purchase of any necessaries I might require preparatory to my voyage; assuring

me that I should have but a very short time allowed me to get ready. I refused, of course, to avail myself of his generosity; but not without abundance of thanks; declaring, as was the truth, that his unmerited goodness overpowered me. He saw the struggles of my soul, penetrated my thoughts, and told me gaily, that my spirit was a haughty one. A charge I cannot deny; for I have ever been almost as resentful (if I may use the expression) of obligation as of injury. The remembrance of services conferred on me has always given me such acute pain as to convince me, that gratitude, like most of our virtues, is in many men what the satirist has called it,—rather an impatience to shake off a weight which pride renders oppressive, than a generous and disinte-

rested wish of returning a favour: let metaphysicians, however, speak their worst of it, gratitude, as it is one of the rarest, so will it still be one of the handsomest infirmities of our nature!

At our entrance, Captain Sowerby received Mr. Orlop (who left us together) with familiarity, and me with great condescension; a very common mode of showing civility, and to me more offensive than the roughest ill-breeding; because I have ever thought the consciousness of being *endured*, a heavy affliction; and accordingly I should now have trembled at my approaching doom, and foreseen in it a world of torture to be inflicted by this sort of forbearance, this mortifying air of patronage, had I not remembered Orlop's sketch of the captain, and per-

ceived at one glance that his visage, at present dressed in smiles, had a much greater aptitude to frowning. It was scored into a multiplicity of long and deep wrinkles, the consequence of frequently using those muscles which passion calls into play: his jaws were fleshless: his mouth wide; his nostrils dilated; and his brows constantly in motion, and so thick and bushy as almost to hide his hollow eyes. All these harsh features were laid down on a skin as yellow as a piece of parchment; and his dark hair looked as if blown about by a high wind.

Though very tall and well made, he was extremely meagre; and gave the idea of a frame emaciated—not from constitution or by disease, but rather by the workings of a turbulent spirit

within. It was therefore plain I had no great reason to dread that his mildness would prove irksome to me; and had I entertained any doubts from his physiognomy, they would have been removed by the inconsistent softness of his voice and gentleness of his expressions; for men of his tempestuous kind are apprehensive of themselves, and whilst on their guard, assume an *outrè* composure, for fear of betraying their ferocity by disturbing the Devil in their bosoms, whom they know to be but in slumber, and easily roused. Along with all these damnable qualities of an ill-tempered person, Sowerby had, as I afterwards discovered, all the amiable traits which are considered as belonging to that character.

His youth had been passed in alter-

nate fits of sinning and repenting; and he could hardly reckon a friend whose feelings he had not wounded, or to whom his purse had not been opened: he had been repeatedly prosecuted for assaults, and was impoverished by his liberality to many who had suffered from his intemperance. He was the delight of waiters and servants wherever he went, and a terror to their employers; as when in a passion every frangible article within his reach, including the heads of the domestics, was sure to go to wreck.

But these were only his *social* practices: in the capacity of a naval commander his innate dignity and love of justice ruled supreme. He was steady, but not in a single instance unjust; and this from principle, not fear, one particle

of which weakness he had not in his composition.

He was besides of an ancient and noble family; had improved an originally good education by much reading, and, which is of greater use, by conversation; had visited most of the European courts, and loved to show on all occasions a fondness for literature and ingenious men. A strange sort of a sea-captain! it will be said; and I shall not dispute the observation.

In the course of our dialogue, he gave me to understand that in three days he should proceed to Portsmouth for embarkation; and that if I thought proper, I might accompany him in the chaise which was to convey him: that his immediate destination was the island of Jamaica; and that, out of respect to

Mr. Orlop's recommendation, there was no mark of attention in his power to show, or procure for me from his officers, which I should not experience during the passage; and that if upon our arrival his design of getting me employed on the island was unsuccessful, he would provide for my safe return to England.

CHAP. XI.

In which divers letters of the alphabet are made use of.

THAT the foregoing chapter contains a very partial view of what occurred at my first visit to Captain Sowerby, I dare not deny. Thus told, all appears smooth and plausible enough; but to do it any kind of justice, I should be both painter and dramatist, as well as historian. His gesticulations while he spoke were of the most extraordinary description. Several times, and without any visible motive or provocation,

and still whispering what he said, he stamped on the ground with such a noise as would have startled a gunner; his smiles were distended into grins; and his whole countenance resembled that of one in a paroxysm of the gout.

Notwithstanding what I beheld, and my forebodings, I promised to attend him punctually and with pleasure on the morning of his departure; and adding a hope that my future conduct would not disgrace his or Mr. Orlop's kindness, made him a respectful bow and retired; impatient to communicate the tidings to Dyer, and ask his aid in laying out some of his own money for various articles.

On reaching his lodging, I found a note from him, desiring me, if I called while he was abroad, to wait half an

hour for him; and this interval I employed in the requisite, yet distressing, task of writing a farewel epistle to my lovely friend, Miss Rivers. I intended this to have been short, rational, and tender, but not impassioned; I thought it such when I perused it: about an hour after it was dispatched I began to suspect that it was not exactly what I had projected; and, before I fell asleep at night, having run over its irrevocable contents in my mind, I found that it was indecorously long, exceedingly foolish, and as full of flames and "fiery ardours" as would have answered for the letter of an incendiary.

Reader, what thinkest thou; has no similar perturbation ever been thy lot? Hast thou not ever discovered that thy pen is sometimes more under the gui-

dance of thy heart than of thy hand? Hast thou never been ashamed at night of what thou hast written in the morning; and wottest thou not what is declared by the oracle,—"*qui amat, non sapit; qui sapit, non amat;*" signifying, that wisdom is one thing, and love another? If thou repliest in the affirmative to these my pithy and profitable queries, then understandest thou me and mine anxieties; if otherwise, I have been talking unto thee of that which thou knowest nothing about, and canst not comprehend.

When Dyer returned, he again wished me joy of my prospects in his own whimsical style; saying he piously hoped, with Croaker in "the Good-natured Man," that all might be well that day three months; that he supposed I

had my private reasons for embracing a change of situation so eagerly as I had done; and that one of them probably was, a desire of increasing my chances of going from this world to the land of spirits: "In London, a death of hunger is all that threatens; but now," said he, "you will doubtless have an opportunity of dying in whatever way you find most entertaining: and you will manage matters but clumsily if you do not contrive to go off either by drowning, battle, or pestilence."—"And if these are not sufficient," said I, "a fourth road to the shades lies open to me in the truculent disposition of my chieftain: the odds are, that some unlucky syllogism which shall give me the advantage in one of our arguments, may cause me to be hanged at the yard-arm of the Medusa:"

for I had explained to Dyer, as far as I could, the character of Sowerby; and he laughed immoderately at the idea of a captain of a man-of-war conducting debates by a novel system of mode and figure, and obtaining his *conclusio universalis* by the medium of a candlestick or a decanter.

Every one, who is acquainted with the British metropolis, will admit that it is rather more difficult to get money there, than to expend it. Mine, by the purchase of such clothes as I wanted, and of a few books, was soon reduced to between six and seven pounds; and with this stock was I once more about to begin the world. Yet, my usual sanguine temper continued, and urged me to view my prospects on the sunny side. I considered that thousands had set out

under worse auspices; that I was young, strong, and cheerful; and stood as fair a chance of advancement as many of those favourites of Fortune who from small beginnings grew into greatness; and in calling over some of their names, I took care not to forget the prophet Mahomet, cardinal Wolsey, and Oliver Cromwell; nor him, who from a shepherd became a king; together with the renowned Mr. Whittington and his cat, one of whom, as I remember, was afterwards made lord mayor of London: there was therefore no reason why I should not succeed to wealth and dignities, and return home, one of these days, with loaded coffers and a diseased liver; marry my angelic Arabella, and settle in the country.

When the last day of my remaining in town was come, I wrote a letter of thanks to my benefactor Orlop, and called to pay my parting compliments to my cousin Type, who told me he most entirely approved of my plan of going to the West Indies; as he probably would have done, had I been going a convict to Botany Bay. "I guess, Mr. Ardent," said he, "you will make a rare planter or driver, or whatever offers in that line, though you could do nothing in ours; *that* I knew would never succeed with you, and I told you so from the first."

I acknowledged the truth of his comment and the probability of his conjecture; and left him, wishing him all the prosperity he deserved; a compli-

ment which, by his face, I could perceive he did not think quite so sincere as it really was.

My concluding evening Dyer and I dedicated to the indulgence of a confidential tête-à-tête; and did not part until a late hour; nor then without mutual reluctance. Fellowship in difficulties had endeared us to one another; nor could I but feel a warm affection for a man whose conversation had charmed, and whose knowledge had improved me, and who with singular generosity had extended his hand to help me when I most required a friend.

His attachment to me seemed as lively as my regard was for him; and arose, in all likelihood, from that partiality we are so apt to entertain for

those on whom we have conferred a benefit.

Neither of us being willing to say adieu, we turned away in solemn silence; the tears standing in the eyes of this worthy fellow, whose heart was as tender as his countenance was hard-favoured.

And here I must interrupt the course of my narrative, for the sake of a remark on the subject of the human physiognomy. My own opinion is, that it never ought to mislead, and that the Creator intended it never should. When we are deceived by the exterior of a fellow-creature, the error lies in ourselves; and whenever I have heard any one lament how much he had been disappointed in the character of another, whose

aspect promised all that was good, and whose bosom proved to be the residence of depravity, I have been tempted to accuse him of unpardonable inattention, but never to pity him: he should have recollected, that a villain never yet bore an *exact* resemblance to an upright man; and should make it his business to mark the difference; for it is perhaps often with human faces as with bank-bills,—the closer the counterfeit, the greater the forgery. Generally, however, the reader of human visages is not in the smallest danger of being deceived: he who looks and does not read, or who willingly misinterprets, must pay the forfeit of indolence or prejudice. An observer such as this would assuredly have taken Markham to his confidence, and have shunned Dyer as an assassin.

The fair skin, the pencilled brow, the gracious bend, and perpetual smile of the former, would have passed for indications of refinement, benevolence, and urbanity; while "the sour lip, the contracted front," and unyielding form of Dyer, would not have signified that thoughtfulness and magnanimity which in fact they bespoke. That in my own case the first was my chosen friend, and the second but the acquaintance of accident, is nothing to the question; the perverseness that reigns over all my movements must answer for me.

By day-break on the appointed morning I arrived at Captain Sowerby's door; the carriage he had ordered, and for which he was ready, drew up; in a short time our trunks were fastened; and before evening we were at the end

of our journey: but lest there might appear too much conciseness in this account of an expedition from London to Portsmouth, I think it best to add, that my companion and myself talked, ate, and drank upon the way, and that the horses which dragged our vehicle were frequently changed for others.

Early the next day, a boat strongly manned carried us to the Medusa, and soon after, for the first time of my life, I saw myself on the deck of a ship of war, where I saw some other things to the full as astonishing; namely, crowds and cleanliness, without noise or confusion; vast numbers of fierce and bold men governed by a few; obedience without affection; and alacrity without merriment.

Presently, as the winds were favour-

able, the sails swelled, the vessel moved; and in the sweet month of April, when the fanning zephyr, the music of the running stream, the melody of the grove, and the verdure of the meadows, invite us; when gentle Nature wooes us with all her blandishments; did I turn my back on every thing gentle and natural, and go to sea! It was in the midst too of a hot war; and without the addition of that pastoral circumstance, I can take upon me to assert that a seventy-four is not at all like a valley of Arcadia.

Captain Sowerby, having withdrawn for a moment to make some arrangements, returned, and introduced me to several of his officers, who admitted me to share their society in the ward-room; the captain politely presenting me as his particular friend, and a person em-

ployed in business of consequence. The effect of this was, that I was treated by them with much respect, and accomodated with an apartment solely for my own use: this indeed, though not so large, exceedingly resembled a water-closet in appearance; but it had an advantage which every gentleman's room cannot boast of; for there was in it as much furniture as it could contain; and there was no need of an inventory to assist my memory in recollecting what it consisted of, the whole being comprised in a cot for my bed, and a trunk for my seat.

Good and ill are comparative terms; and accordingly I thought myself commodiously lodged, when I beheld how others were provided for. By degrees I became more than reconciled to my

new situation; the provisions of which I partook were abundant, and the civility of the lieutenants, with whom I chiefly associated, such, that a more fastidious guest than myself would have found nothing to complain of. They seemed all perfectly to understand their profession, and were mostly plain, modest, and manly: a character which, if not unexceptionably true, suits the generality of naval officers; and to say this of them, is to say a great deal. The tribute of praise is surely due to those who maintain propriety of conduct, and display many of the graces of civilized life, in a state of existence which does constant violence to every honest propensity of the human mind; where disease and death, in every dreadful variety, present themselves; where

to murmur against suffering is a crime, though to submit to it is scarcely a virtue; and where perpetual care is the only preservative against perpetual danger.

I employed much of my time in reading or writing; occasionally indulging in the pleasure of original composition; but more commonly in an occupation of which I am at a loss to say whether the advantage or amusement was greatest. I made a very large blank-paper book, and devoted some hours daily to the task of inscribing in it alphabetically, from memory, the names, and a summary view of the works, of all the authors I had ever studied; what opinion mankind had passed upon their labours, and what was my own. To this I added all the know-

ledge I had acquired on every different subject; carefully noting such topics as had either totally escaped my attention, or been but superficially examined: and it is not possible for those who have not tried a similar expedient, to conceive the delight, and I may say the instruction, it afforded me. Great was my rapture when my judgment was clear, and memory flowed faster than my pen could write: while, on the contrary, I derived considerable utility from the detection of my ignorance, and of the many prejudices and partialities which, like others, I had imbibed, and should have continued to cherish, but for the invention of this intellectual scrutiny. And though I afterwards lost my book, the benefit it afforded me still is mine.

My exercise consisted in frequently going aloft, or pacing the deck: and this practice, with temperance and early hours, secured me health, and even spirits. These indeed would sometimes sink, when I reflected on certain past events, or attempted to look into the doubtful future; but I tried every rational means of repelling the attacks of gloomy apprehension; and found none more efficacious than recalling the example and the precepts of Dyer; one of whose favourite positions particularly served to console me: he used to say, and he was certainly in the right, that there are but two ills with which man has to struggle,—loss of health, and loss of friends;—that few were in want of both; and that the possession of the one

almost compensated for the absence of the other.

When tried by this rule, my fate did not appear such as to authorise much repining or regret: and the most precious and most deceitful of all our powers—the power of Hoping—did not forsake me.

To these sources of satisfaction I must not omit to add the behaviour of Captain Sowerby: he invited me often to his table, where I enjoyed many an agreeable afternoon. From a principle of good-breeding, he subdued, on these occasions, the irascibility of his temper; and gradually treating me with confidence, gave me at length a full view of his valuable yet most extraordinary character. He was, in fact, like no other

man I have ever met: impressed with what Orlop had insinuated of his violence, I was from timidity at first far from being at ease in his presence; but after a few visits this species of dread totally left me, and was succeeded by feelings utterly distinct from terror; for I perceived, that evidently some heavy sorrow had made havock of a very noble heart, and that the peevishness of his disposition proceeded from some calamity that had befallen him in the early part of his life, and for ever destroyed his peace.

Though this was but the suggestion of my own fancy, I am persuaded his melancholy could have had no other cause; and as his talents and accomplishments were undoubtedly of the highest class, and his conduct to me was distinguished by

every flattering attention, I should have been worse than insensible not to have been inspired with veneration and respect for such a man. The slight, however, by which Orlop had prepared me for his peculiarities, was as judicious as the effect produced was pleasant: it made me properly cautious; and I saw that if I but took care, in my intercourse with him, not to "wake the nerve where agonies are born," I was in less danger of receiving offence in his company, than in that of any merry vulgar wag that ever existed.

I cannot name a man less loquacious than he really was, or more reserved with regard to his private affairs, or the characters of others; and this did not arise from natural sullenness or taciturnity, but was the effect of habit ac-

quired in the fittest schools for teaching prudence and self-denial,—a life of adversity, and the military profession.

Now and then, when it was fair weather, and that nothing beyond the ordinary routine of business on board called for his attention, he seemed in some measure to forget himself; and then no person could be more instructive or agreeable: he was choice in his expressions, abounded in various kinds of information, and possessed the rare and happy art of never being tedious.

CHAP. XII.

Which would not have appeared if it had not been written.

CAPTAIN Sowerby had treasured up innumerable anecdotes; and amongst these, was one so remarkable as to make a deep impression on me; and could I repeat the story as I received it when told to me, and give it all the interest which it derived from his manner of relating it, I should not think an apology for its introduction necessary. Something resembling it I have met with elsewhere, but the following are

the circumstances as I had them from him.—

"In the fifteenth century," said the captain, "when a regular and friendly communication subsisted between Ireland and the Spanish monarchy, an ancestor of mine lived in good repute as a merchant in the ancient town of Galway, between which port and Cadiz there was a constant trade; and this gentleman, whose name was Lynch, being a chief person, and very wealthy, had, from commercial views, encouraged on all occasions a friendship that proved so lucrative both to his townsmen and to the Spaniards.

"In order the more firmly to establish this desirable connexion he had himself gone on a voyage to Spain; and was received, when at Cadiz, at the

house of a rich and respectable merchant of the name of Gomez, with the utmost hospitality, and every mark of esteem suitable to his own fair reputation and the liberality of his entertainer.

"Upon his departure for his own country, out of a wish to pay a compliment for the numerous civilities he had received from Signior Gomez, he requested of him, as a particular favour, to allow his son, a youth of nineteen, to accompany him to Ireland; promising to take parental care of him during his stay there, and to provide for his being safely restored to his friends whenever he desired to return.

"Young Gomez, who was the pride of his parents and relations, was rejoiced at this agreeable opportunity of seeing

the world, and the merchant's request gratefully complied with by his father.

"They embarked accordingly, and after an easy passage arrived in the bay of Galway, and went on shore to Lynch's house, where he presented his young Spanish acquaintance to his family; recommending him particularly for a companion to his only son, who was but a year or two older than Gomez, and considered one of the finest youths of his time: the beauty of his person, and the winning softness of his manners, rendered him a favourite with the fair sex; he was idolised by the common people for his affability and spirit, and respected by all ranks for his abilities: but his endowments were not unattended by what is too often seen united with superior qualities, a tendency to the pleasures of a

libertine; which had greatly afflicted his father, who was himself exemplary for the purity of his life. He however had lately conceived the fullest hopes of his reformation, from discovering that he paid honourable addresses to a very engaging and lovely girl, the daughter of one of his richest and most respectable neighbours; and he now found additional satisfaction in procuring for his son the company of one so serious and well brought up as the youthful Gomez; wishing that it might assist to draw him entirely from licentious courses; and being this year of his return unusually solicitous that nothing should happen to cast a stain upon his house or native town, of which he then was mayor;—a rank in those turbulent and unenlightened days of the greatest importance, and

on the management of which, more than on that of any other civil employment, the general security rested.

"For a length of time the young men lived together in perfect harmony; and grand entertainments were made at the mayor's house; both in honour of the stranger, and for the sake of advancing the suit of his son Walter to the beautiful Agnes.

"At one of these festivals, which, as usual, she adorned with her presence, it happened that her lover either saw, or—which with lovers is the same—imagined that he saw, rapture and admiration in her bewitching eyes, whenever she looked on the Spaniard, and a cold neglect in her behaviour towards himself.

"His ardent and unruly passions took fire at the thought; he seized an

opportunity—not of asking his mistress if his suspicions were founded in fancy or reality—but of upbraiding her for her infidelity, in terms of haughty anger. She in her turn, astonished and irritated by such unexpected injustice from the chosen of her heart, affected disdain, to conceal her fondness, and refused to deny the charge.

"Love, says some philosopher, who assuredly had felt the passion, for the most part resembles hatred rather than affection. What now passed between these young persons was a confirmation of the truth contained in that remark. Though mutually enamoured, one obeyed the dictates of jealousy, the other of pride: they parted in violence; and while the forlorn Agnes may be supposed retiring to weep over her wrongs,

her admirer, racked by the fiends and furies that possessed his bosom, withdrew to revolve the direful project of revenge. Accident contributed at once to strengthen his determination and facilitate his purpose. The following night, as he passed slowly and alone by the residence of his fair one, he perceived a man come from the house, and knew him to be Gomez.

"He had indeed spent his evening there, being invited by the father of Agnes, who spoke the language of Spain with fluency, and courted the society of all who could converse with him.

"Urged by his rage, the lover pursued his imagined rival; and he, alarmed by his voice, which he did not recollect, fled before him; but from ignorance of the streets, directed his steps towards a

solitary quarter of the town, close to the sea. Before he had quite reached the water's edge, his mad and cruel pursuer overtook him; darted a poniard into his heart, and plunged him bleeding into the waves!

"In the night, the tide threw the body of this innocent victim of insanity back upon the beach, where it was found, and soon recognised. The rash and wretched murderer (for from himself the particulars were obtained) had scarcely done the sanguinary act when he repented it; but fear, or rather that feeling which teaches us to preserve life even when we no longer love it, caused him to hasten from the scene of his crime, and seek to hide himself in the recesses of a wood at some distance.

"Here he could hide—but, alas!

not from himself: the shades of the night and the darkness of the forest were unto him as the noon of day. In agonies of despair, he cried aloud and rolled himself upon the earth; and when the first streaks of light appeared in the sky, he rose, with a settled resolution of expiating his guilt as far as he could, by surrendering himself to the law; and with this intention was returning to town, when he perceived a crowd of persons approaching. Amongst these, with shame and terror he beheld his father, on horseback, and attended by several officers of justice and a military guard.

"On finding the body of the Spaniard, it was evident he had been killed by a dagger found near him, his own being by his side unsheathed: and a suspicion had also arisen that his assassin

must have retreated towards the wood; as some fishermen, who lay in a boat near the shore, had found a white hat ornamented with feathers floating, as if blown from the road, almost a mile further on, and in that direction; and the velvet bonnet which the person slain was remarked for wearing, was with the body.

"Had the unhappy criminal wished to conceal the fact, his distracted appearance would have betrayed him; but with perfect consistency, though in broken accents, he proclaimed himself the murderer, declared his contrition for an enormity to which frenzy had impelled him, and imploring pardon of Heaven, desired to be conducted to prison.

"His disconsolate parent, oppressed

by a weight of amazement and affliction, could scarcely preserve his equanimity, though a man of almost unexampled firmness: he foresaw the dreadful consequences of complying with his frantic son's demand; and that should he shrink from his duty, public disgrace awaited himself.

"As mayor, he had the power of life and death; and he remembered that already, in the case of another, he had used the authority given him with rigid severity: but, though he perceived that calamity must now overwhelm him and his race, he sacrificed all personal considerations to his love of justice, and ordered the guards to secure their prisoner. The command was reluctantly obeyed; and the mournful procession moved back to the town; penetrating with

difficulty the immense crowds of people whom by this time curiosity had brought out.

"A more extraordinary scene has seldom been witnessed: surprise, compassion, and horror were discernible in the countenances of all. While some expressed admiration and pity for their upright magistrate; many of the lower classes, feeling commiseration for the fate of their favourite youth, filled the air with lamentations and sighs.

"The uproar alone would have told the sad intelligence to the merchant's family; but they were doomed to a still greater shock than what general rumour could give, for the strong prison of the town was immediately next to his own house; and the mother and sister of the wretched Walter were spectators of his

approach, bare-headed, pale, bound, and surrounded with spears. Their outcries and faintings added to this most terrific trial of the father's fortitude: but such moments," said Captain Sowerby, "are really the tests of virtue: the ordinary adversities of life are insufficient to show it in its genuine lustre; or prove how potent, how beautiful it is; or indeed to convince us, that there exists no force by which it can be subdued.

"If I cannot find words adequate to a description of the great and sudden wretchedness which filled this, till now, happy and honourable family, it is still less in my power to picture the despair of the tender and unfortunate Agnes.

"The legal inquiry which followed, was short: on his own confession, strengthened by corresponding circum-

stances, the young man was convicted of the murder, and in public received the sentence of death from his father!

"No sooner was this known to the populace, than they surrounded the place of the criminal's confinement; and at first were contented with expressing their dissatisfaction by murmurs of regret, and expostulations with the guards; but by degrees they became tumultuous, and were prevented only by the military force from attacking the prison and pulling down the magistrate's house: and their disorder was increased by understanding that the prisoner was now desirous of being rescued: which in some measure was true; for as his madness subsided, his love returned. The thought of for ever parting from the object of his affections was intolerable;

and he began to see of what value the gift of existence was, of which his remorseless hand had deprived an unoffending stranger.

"By strenuous exertions the people were for the present dispersed; and even hints were conveyed to them that mercy would be extended to the prisoner. But whatever the inward struggles of the father and the man might have been, the firmness of the patriot was unshaken. He was not to be wrought upon, either by the dread of popular clamour; the odium that would attach to his name; the prayers and tears of his kneeling family; the undescribable despair of the hapless young lady; or, harder to withstand than all these—the yearnings of a paternal breast: but, with magnanimity that would have done credit to the

sternest hero of Greece or Rome, he himself descended at night to the dungeon where his son lay, for the double and direful purpose of announcing to him that his sentence was to be executed on the following morning, and of watching with him to prevent the possibility of his escape.

"One can hardly fancy any thing more appaling than such a vigil as this. He entered, holding a lamp, and accompanied by a priest (from whom the account was received); and locking the grate, kept fast the keys in his hand, and seated himself in a recess of the wall. His son drew near him, and with a faltering tongue asked if he had any thing to hope: he answered him—'No, my 'son: your life is forfeited to the laws, 'and at sun-rise you must die. I have

'prayed for your prosperity: that is at 'an end; with the world you have done 'for ever; and I am now come to join 'this good man in petitioning God to 'give you such composure as will ena- 'ble you to meet your punishment with 'resignation.' And then, as if fearful of relapsing into his natural softness, and of forgetting the great duty he had imposed on himself, he requested the priest to proceed; and they knelt together.

" The young man's native spirit seemed gradually to be restored to him: he joined fervently in prayer; sighed heavily from time to time; but spoke of life and its concerns no more. And thus, with intervals of silence, the woful night passed over.

" It was scarcely day, when the ex-

pected summons to prepare was given by the guard without. The father rose, and assisted to remove the irons which still bound his unfortunate son; then unlocking the door, he ordered him to stand between the priest and himself, and lean upon an arm of each: and in this manner they ascended a flight of steps lined with soldiers, and were passing on to gain the street, where a strong escort had been appointed to receive and go along with them to the usual place of punishment, at the extremity of the town.

"The concluding scene of the father's struggles and the son's misery was, it might be supposed, now very nigh: but a trial more severe yet awaited them; and the unparallelled firmness of the former was to undergo a still fur-

ther proof. Prodigious crowds had gathered, and were loud in their outcries for mercy; threatening, if not complied with, instant destruction to the magistrate. In vain did he exhort them to preserve tranquillity, and suffer the law to take its course: the soldiers themselves were melted by the circumstances of this most pitiable case; and no longer able, or willing, to do their duty, permitted the populace to approach the house, and to continue their well-meant but unlawful opposition. To attempt now to pass through them was hopeless; but having withstood their tears and prayers, and the stronger appeal of his own affections, this virtuous, unhappy, and resolute father determined not to yield from a motive of personal fear, but by one desperate and incredible

effort to perform the horrid sacrifice which he had vowed to pay on the altar of justice; and if he fell, to fall as became a man—not to be compelled to prefer the advantage of an individual to the rights of his country.

"It is probable he was prepared for this extremity; for turning back, and still keeping hold of his son, he mounted by some winding stairs within the building, and which led to an arched window that overlooked the street. He there presented himself and his victim, about whose neck he had fastened the rope which had bound him; and securing the other end in an iron projecting from the wall, he embraced the wretched Walter—and launched him into eternity.

"Expecting instant death from the fury of the rabble, he retained his situa-

tion: but this act of greatness awed them: they stood fixed in amazement: a sentiment of admiration and sorrow united, alone prevailed; and when all was over, they slowly and peaceably retired;—so wondrous is the influence of a lofty and daring mind.

"The innocent cause of this lamentable tragedy is said to have died of grief, and the father of her lover to have secluded himself for the remainder of his days; never having been seen again, except by his mourning family.

"The house of this magistrate still exists; and the memorable window is distinguished by a representation in stone of a human skull and two bones crossed beneath it: put up, it is supposed, as a public memorial of the transaction, about the time when it occurred.

"Admitting," said Captain Sowerby, "the facts to be as they are stated, the story is singular, and the lesson it affords not to be despised."

CHAP. XIII.

Which immediately follows the foregoing.

THE condescension of the captain towards me, though it increased, was become more agreeable to me than I had found it on our first acquaintance; the weather continued favourable; and we had been now on our voyage several days without sickness, accident, or disagreement of any kind on board; when early one morning, whilst I lay in my cot revolving the past and guessing at the future, I heard an unusual noise

and bustle around me. I *turned-out*, according to the sea phrase, directly, and as soon as possible went on deck, where I learned the cause of my alarm: every one was in motion; several sail had been descried at no great distance, and little doubt existed of their being enemies. In about an hour more our suspense was at an end; for the head-most ship was near enough to make us certain that she was French, and at least of equal force with the Medusa: she was followed by many others; and now, since it was not possible for us to fight with any chance of success, it became necessary either to surrender or try and escape the pursuit.

A council was immediately called, and it was the unanimous opinion that on this occasion *discretion was the better*

part of valour; and without any mention being made of Sir John Falstaff, the witty knight's maxim was adopted;—our course was altered, and after a chase of six hours, during which many shots were fired at us, but without injury, we got completely clear of the foe.

Hardly however were we convinced of our safety from one danger, when we were menaced with another still more formidable: suddenly the sky was overcast; the fresh breeze that had hitherto favoured us, swelled to a tempest, and the heaving ocean into billows that actually appeared mountain-high. We were separated from our merchantmen, and for two days were obliged to run before the gale, which the oldest seaman on board allowed to be tremendous.

Towards the morning of the third,

various matters, deranged by the storm, were put to *rights*; the people got refreshment; and all again being calm, we congratulated ourselves on the change from bad to good, and indeed showed our sense in doing this without delay; because just as we had agreed that no ship's crew was ever more fortunate, a circumstance occurred which rendered that rather a dubious point; and this was, our finding ourselves almost within gun-shot of two French men-of-war, each of equal force with us, and bearing down to attack us. Battle was now inevitable, and victory very unlikely; and doubtless Captain Sowerby was a man of too much discernment not to think so; but his spirit also was too high to let this opinion be known.

On the contrary, he issued the ne-

cessary orders, not merely with coolness, but cheerfulness; the ship was cleared for action; every one went to his station, and I to the place allotted to the surgeons; wherein, though I could be of little use, I should less encumber others than by remaining on deck. As I went below, I thought of Roderick Random on a like occasion; but the author of that admirable work could do with his hero what he pleased, and has therefore qualified him with a medical education: in life things do not fall out quite so apropos; and I found myself at leisure to indulge in reflexion, and the only being, amongst six hundred of my fellow-creatures, totally incapable of assisting the common cause: a discovery which somewhat embarrassed me, as I felt awkward in being thus forced to

make use of my reason when all around me seemed to have lost theirs.

I however went down to the cock-pit; and had just arrived in those dismal regions, when I could feel the huge frame of the vessel tremble, and heard the thunder roll on every side. Each moment the hideous din increased; and the figures that soon presented themselves for aid to the doctor and his mates, deformed with wounds and blackened with smoke, were proofs of the bloody work that was doing above.

Now, a few moments of silence were succeeded by redoubled discharges of cannon: again a pause, and again the dreadful peal, accompanied by oaths and shouts and groans. In short, the hell of the heathen, with all its imaginary horrors, has in it nothing so horrible

as this scene exhibited; nor can they who have not witnessed it, and witnessed it as I did, form a just conception of any thing more shocking, or more unsuitable to beings styling themselves rational and human.

The frightful detail may I dare say be found in the public papers of that day, to which I refer the curious; contenting myself with a brief notice of one of those transactions which are so often read and talked of by the coffeehouse lounger, and the enervated, and I hope unthinking, male and female votary of fashion, not with indifference — that would be comparatively decent — but with pleasure: the doleful narrative whets the appetite for carnage and for breakfast: a duel is flat, and a murder insipid, to a sea-fight: and such a com-

but as I have mentioned, affords only the tenth of the delight derived from an engagement between the two grand fleets; especially when, with a preposterous application of politeness and courtly breeding, the whole concludes with—"I have the *honour* to forward a list of the killed and wounded in the several ships," &c.—Proh pudor!

After two hours of obstinate and sanguinary conflict, our good ship was, alas! taken possession of by the enemy; but, to judge from what I saw on being ordered to go on deck, she was not a very valuable prize: her sides were almost laid open; her decks torn-up; her rigging hanging in useless strings; the sails full of shot-holes; and half of the crew and two thirds of the officers disabled or slain.

Each of the French ships had suffered equally; and the gallant resistance which Sowerby made, procured him and his people very respectful treatment: the latter were distributed variously on board the three vessels; and I was allowed to attend the captain, who was permitted, with several of his officers, to remain in the Medusa; but carefully watched, so as to prevent any private conversations with one another. I was thus hindered from paying the attention I owed to Sowerby, and was now particularly anxious to show him: not that I had the most distant idea of offering him consolation, as it is usually called—no one could require it less; and it was as impossible to have pitied as not to have admired him. It seemed indeed, as has been said of some one else,

that adversity was his shining time. He was neither depressed nor rendered morose by his change of fortune; but talked with his captors, speaking French as fluently as they did; said something gracious to each of his own lieutenants; and kindly spoke to me of our miscarriage, and so much with an appearance of sincerity, as to persuade me, that, had our design of going to the West Indies succeeded, he would have essentially befriended me.

He also took occasion to praise my equanimity under the reverse we had suffered: but I must ingenuously declare I have no title to the compliment: my mind had become familiar with disappointment; and as my hopes had not been raised very high, their being defeated gave me little concern.

In many instances, the early and excellent advice of honest Gay, Flaybottom's assistant, had been of great advantage to me; and by his encouragement I had, amongst other attainments, acquired such knowledge of French as to read it critically, and perfectly to understand whatever was said, though, from want of habit, I spoke it badly.

While sitting at table with the French officers, they perceived that I comprehended their discourse; and one of them asked me if I spoke the language: I answered no; and from that moment I thought I observed something mysterious in their behaviour towards me; as they neither addressed themselves to me again, nor even spoke together in my hearing; though they often fixed their eyes on me in a very re-

markable manner; and two or three times, having done this, went apart, as if to speak of me.

I cannot say that this, though it excited my curiosity, created me much uneasiness; and I believe I should not have noticed the circumstance, but for another alteration which accompanied it; and this was, that whichever way I chanced to move, I observed an old seaman, with pistols in his belt and a cutlass hanging at his side, still following me: he was near me when I went below at night to my hammock, and always the first person I beheld when I woke. This was enigmatical and alarming; and I determined to communicate my observations to Captain Sowerby, or some of his officers; and was prevented only by what I thought an accidental want of

opportunity, but which was certainly designed, as the sequel will prove.

At night the prisoners were carefully separated, and unremittingly watched; and during the day it was impossible to enjoy one quiet or serious moment: we were greatly crowded on board; and though, as the weather was good, they had but little to do, these volatile and noisy people were continually in motion, and seemed indefatigable in dancing the "Carmagnole," and singing the Marseillois Hymn in chorus: while, under pretence of paying respect to the captive commander and his friends, poor Sowerby, each of the British officers, and myself, were perpetually encircled by four or five and twenty of the mercurial gentry into whose hands we had fallen.

Immediately after the action they had avowed their intention of steering for the nearest French port; and in a few days we made the harbour of L'Orient.

On entering this place, their vigilance respecting me was doubled: I fancied that they regarded no one else; and had only time allowed me to bid a hasty farewel to my commander and my companions, when I was put into a boat that lay along-side, under the care of a party of marines and two officers from the ship, and thus hurried on shore.

It may easily be supposed that I could have dispensed with these honours, and that I felt far from tranquil in my present situation. My perplexity indeed was so considerable as totally to banish from my memory every particle

of my French vocabulary, and render me incapable of asking the only question I wished to have answered,—namely, what the meaning of all this was.

Had I interrogated the boat's crew, it would probably have been to no purpose: both officers, soldiers, and sailors vied with each other in cries of *vive la nation*, and in vociferating the burden of a favourite song, "*plutot la mort que l'esclavage*," until we reached the land; on which we had hardly room to place our feet, so thronged was every part of the shore with multitudes of curious and rejoicing spectators.

The air was rent with huzzas, and triumph sparkled in every eye: novelty is never without its charms; with the French it is particularly attractive; and there was something so perfectly new to

them in the capture of an English man-of-war, that their exultation was pardonable.

What surprised me more was, that at such a moment, instead of being overlooked, I was universally noticed, and pointed at by hundreds as I proceeded, like an eastern bashaw, environed by my guards, to the town-house. I was there placed in an apartment, whilst the officers left me, locking the door and posting sentinels without.

In about an hour, two strange officers entered, preceded by a magistrate with a red bonnet on his head and a scarf across his shoulders; and followed by a fellow bearing a large flat wicker basket, which he set down, and opening, displayed the several articles for eating a dinner with, and the dinner itself.

This was arranged upon a large marble side-table. One of the officers motioned to me to sit down; I drew a chair; they did the like; and our meal was soon finished, in profound silence on my part, and nearly so on theirs; when, having each drank a tumbler or two of thin wine, the citizen with the red bonnet, which he had not taken off, rose, went to the door, and, saying something to the guard, made a sign to us to advance.

On reaching the street, I perceived, with some amazement and more apprehension, a party of dragoons drawn up on each side of a carriage, into which I was rather pushed than handed by my military messmates, who also got in, and nodding roughly to the municipal chieftain, who remained behind, the postillions, already mounted, cracked their

whips, and the dragoons keeping up with us, we set off at what even in England would have been a swift pace; and in this manner, changing horses and our guard of cavalry frequently, and but seldom stopping even for refreshment, we journeyed the entire of that and the ensuing night.

Confusion of mind and fatigue had made me feverish; I could neither keep my eyes open nor sleep; and had begun to wish with impatience for any termination to this state of inconvenience, and to sigh for freedom and famine in my London garret, when the unusual roughness of the road roused me; and looking up, I found, by the twilight of a summer's morning, that we were in an immense long and deserted street. My comrades were speaking, and one of

them, looking at the other, said aloud, as if he intended that I should understand him, " *c'est la barriere.*" The carriage stopped; one of the officers handed a paper to some person who stood near the window, and who went away for a few minutes; but returned, and restoring what I conjectured to be our passport, ordered us to drive on.

It was now scarcely necessary for me to put a question, which nevertheless I found both confidence and language enough to ask; viz. whether we were not in Paris. I was rather amazed, but not in the least sorry, to receive for answer that we were: some subsequent events showed me that I ought to have been sorry, and not astonished; but mortals are for ever making mistakes on these points. Not but there is enough

in this world to make us wonder, and grieve too; only we generally contrive to do both in the wrong place.

We proceeded through many streets, and were detained some time in each by patrols; so that it was broad day when the carriage stopped in front of a large building on one side of a very extensive square nearly filled with soldiers. Morning, it may be observed, in a city, is a different thing from what it is in the country; and morning in Paris differs still more widely from the opening of a rural day, than it does even in London; but never had I yet beheld such a morning scene as I saw now! On whichever side I turned my eyes, the rays of the sun seemed to me to light on nothing but arms: in every face there was eagerness; in every hat or cap a tri-co-

loured cockade; in every hand a weapon: and all the shops were shut, though their owners must have been up and abroad.

While lost in conjecture, I was suffered to stand about ten minutes in a circle of national guards, without the company of my fellow-travellers, who had, I suppose, given me in charge to the soldiers. They presently re-appeared, and conducted me into an apartment on the ground-floor of this barrack or public office, where they desired me to repose myself—a hint they had no occasion to repeat: I stretched myself on a black-leather sofa in the room, and, overpowered by weariness and vexation, instantly dropped asleep.

Had it depended on me, I should

probably have continued sleeping for the remainder of that day; but when I had lain above an hour, I was under the necessity of giving up that recreation for one of another kind, being disturbed by a violent noise; to account for which I need only mention, that in my room there were about threescore Frenchmen; and outside of it, perhaps twelve drums beating and as many fifes playing *ça ira*, all at once.

Amongst the attendants on my levee, I discerned five or six with each a scarf similar to that worn by the municipal officer at L'Orient. One of these desired me to rise and go with him: I rose accordingly, and followed him into a spacious hall thronged with soldiers, who opened to the right and left, and

allowed me to perceive three men seated at a long table, on which were scattered sabres, pistols, and bundles of papers. And now all I had ever heard of the Revolutionary Tribunal recurred to me; for I concluded myself brought before it; and knowing that its members were rather in the habit of ordering prisoners to execution without the ceremony of a a trial, I took it for granted that my time was come, and that the smallest recompense my captors could expect for their trouble on my account, would be to cut off my head.

It may be thought a proof of vanity and presumption in me to imagine myself entitled to such a compliment; but a much higher one was intended for me, as will presently be seen. Previously, however, let me try to describe the ap-

pearance of the three dispensers of justice in whose presence I stood.

Two of them were young men; the other, who sat in the centre, middle-aged; and all were attired in strict conformity to the etiquette of a Jacobin toilette; whereof I presume soap was not an article, as they none of them seemed to have been ever either washed or shaved. Their secretary, on the contrary, who sat at one extremity of the table, was quite of a different stamp—a sleek, fair, cleanly man, with light hair; dressed in black, and wearing a rich topaz ring; but his eye was sleepy and treacherous (as French eyes often are); and his pale steady countenance would have told the wretch whose life depended on him, not to hope for mercy or pity at his hands. Whereas the fero-

city of his employers resided rather in their dirty beards and greasy clothes, than in their physiognomies.

The chief of them, commanding silence, ordered that my charge, which I found had been prepared, should be read, whilst I was bid to attend but not to speak.

Fortunately I was not prohibited from laughing, because it was out of my power to refrain, when I heard myself formally indited as a member of—the royal family of France! Of which of the emigrant princes I was the representative, I cannot at present say; but I believe there is no instance on record of any potentate or grandee so speedily deprived of his title after coming into possession, as I was: in truth, so evanescent were my honours, that one quarter

of an hour sufficed to metamorphose my highness into a barbarous English seaman, cover with confusion my sagacious prosecutors, and make the hall resound with the merriment of the judges at their expense.

Being ignorant of the punishment awarded by the law for such a crime as not being a prince, I cannot take upon me to say exactly what might now have been my fate, and, in its stead, must therefore relate what it was.

In the midst of the laughter and tumult of which I was the innocent cause, the cry of "*aux armes*" arose without, accompanied by the beating of drums and the ringing of the *tocsin*. Dismay and uproar ensued; in an instant I was alone, and at liberty to shift for myself: nor have I always done that so success-

ally as I did in this instance; because, though I walked into the square in want of rest, society, and lodging, I contrived in less than three minutes, without any effort or expense on my part, to provide myself with these requisites;—certainly not in a manner the most eligible; but gentlemen who travel into foreign realms under my circumstances, ought not to be over-nice. Thus it was: I had hardly walked ten paces from the door, when a civil man, in the uniform of a grenadier of the national guards, with a firelock in his hand, very obligingly inserted the point of his bayonet into the small of my back, and laying hold of my arm, dragged me across the square, and thrust me, along with several more, into what had been a place of divine

worship, and was at present used for a prison.

Here there were at least eighty other persons; some extended on heaps of straw; others, but newly arrived, standing aghast and wonder-struck; some seated on the marble pavement, conversing together; some singing, and some drawing caricatures on the walls with charcoal.

In a corner lay a thin old man, dressed in grey clothes; his head not so much covered as ornamented with a few silver locks, and his countenance, which was the very emblem of meekness, illuminated by a strong light, which fell on it from a painted window opposite to him.

His figure caught my attention irre-

sistibly; and I looked the more stedfastly at him, as I supposed him wrapt in thought, and regardless, not only of me, but of the world. His eyes were fixed on a small agate cross, which he held before him; but on my moving, he raised his head, replaced the object of his contemplation in his bosom, and with an expression more inviting than a smile, seemed as if he wished to make room for me by his side, and to perceive that I stood in need of rest.

Sterne himself never translated the gestures of another with greater accuracy than I did his: I approached him, and, sitting down, inclined my head a degree or two lower than the angle of courtesy—and, he being also a translator, this had its proper effect. He spoke to me: "You are fatigued, my son;

and probably you are hungry?" and my appearance indeed authorised both these surmises. I told him I was more in want of rest than food; my pronunciation informing him also that I was not a Frenchman: he then addressed me, I believe, in German; but I undeceived him, and said I was from England; upon which, greatly to my satisfaction, he showed me that, for a foreigner, he was well acquainted with my native language: at hearing which once more, my heart bounded, and I felt comparatively happy.

CHAP. XIV.

Which precedes what comes after it.

THAT an invitation to sit on straw, and the sound of a few words in English, should produce happiness, is not altogether in the common course of affairs; but some allowance must be made for the feelings of a man, who, setting out to be a secretary in the West Indies, finds himself in a goal in France.

My hapless neighbour, by his own acknowledgment, had a much stronger claim to a prison than I had: he was a

priest, and had exhorted his brethren to charity and peace, and to dwell together in unity, just at that season when discord happened to be the order of the day.

When I acquainted him with the general circumstances of my story, he expressed surprise and compassion; observing however, that although their enemies might deal hardly with him and some others of the confined, I was in no danger of any thing worse than what usually befals prisoners of war. From further conversation, I learned that during the last two or three days above thirty persons had been sent from the place we were then in, to the scaffold; and this solely in consequence of party violence. According to the good old priest's account of the existing pe-

riod, it was the triumph of depravity; when to be virtuous was to be guilty; and the persecutor alone was safe: "In short, my dear child," said he (a Frenchman loves to jest on all occasions), "none are sent to heaven by these righteous tribunals, except those who least deserve to go there."

I questioned him as to the possibility of escaping; but this he assured me was utterly impracticable; and rising, we walked together up and down the aisles of the cathedral (for such it was where we were enclosed), and I perceived that it was as strongly guarded as it could be; that the windows were extremely high, and the door leading into the belfry made of iron, and secured with chains. I now learned that food of the coarsest kind was brought in

twice a day, and distributed in small portions to the prisoners by the guard, and under the inspection of a municipal officer, and that the same persons never came a second time.

I inquired next where I should lie when night approached, and Monsieur Marbœuf, the name of my companion, pointed out to me the asylum he had made choice of for himself, which was a space between the wall and a large antique tomb, on which a grim and noseless alabaster baron, "for ever silent and for ever sad," was kneeling; and where, seeing there was room for another, I determined also to take up my abode.

Could I have foreseen the event of the ensuing day, I had no need to have been so very solicitous about my bedchamber.

As we continued our walk, the great door of the church was thrown open, and our purveyors entered with the allowance of provision granted us by the benevolence of the Nation; and when I beheld what my portion was, I could not help remembering Dyer's lectures on temperance. It was plain that the great personages who watched over us were resolved none of us should cheat the executioner by dying of repletion; my share of dinner amounting to about two ounces of black bread, and as many of roasted chesnuts, with one pint of cold water: and I suspect that a better specific against apoplexy has not yet been thought of.

When the guards were withdrawn and the doors closed, M. Marbœuf observed, that we should not in all probability be again disturbed for the remain-

der of the day, and advised me to lie down and sleep: I was of the same opinion; but first devoured my bread and chesnuts; on which I might be said to have dined extremely well, if I could have subjoined a roast fowl and a bottle of claret to the repast.

My preparations for going to rest were now intruded upon by the beating of a drum; and looking round, I saw that the door stood open, that several officers were approaching, and that consternation was written on the aspects of my fellow-captives, who had collected together, and were intently watching the issue of this visit.

The purport of it was, that each should pass in review before these members of the Committee of Safety, as they were called, and have their names in-

scribed in a register which one of them carried. When it came to my turn, I pronounced both my christian and surname distinctly, and was going to add my condition, and the sense I entertained of the injustice done me, but was desired to be silent and stand out of the way. A person wearing a torn jacket and ragged trowsers, and who dines upon chesnuts in prison, must not dispute with members of a committee: I therefore acquiesced, and returned to my straw, while the rest dispersed also, and our visitors left us.

Unable to account for the alarm created by their appearance, I questioned the priest, who shook his hoary head, and replied, that it boded some of the prisoners no good: "The last occurrence of the kind," said he, "was the

forerunner of death to ten of our number, who the next morning were taken hence and undoubtedly sent from the *Place de la Revolution* to the other world." I heard this answer with an emotion of horror and pity, for the injury inflicted on one party of men by the tyranny of another; but, conscious of not being myself attached to either, and in full expectation of being shortly set free, I again extended myself on my bed, and actually slept without once waking until the following morning.

This refreshment was not only necessary to recruit my exhausted vigour, but was exceedingly well-timed in another respect; as it the better prepared me to undergo a kind of exercise which I did not reckon upon, and for which all

the strength I could muster was not more than I required.

By day-light, the cursed drum-beating gave the dreadful signal; all eyes were directed to the door, as it creaked dismally on its hinges; the guard advanced; the ministers of fate entered; and one of them, standing out from the rest, began to call over the names on his list; each individual, as his was pronounced, being ordered to come forward. The melancholy band now amounted to fourteen, and the old ecclesiastic was not of the number: pleased to observe this, I looked towards him with an air of congratulation, when I felt myself seized, and, before I could well turn round, I was shoved into the lane made by the soldiers for those already selected.

Expostulation and delay were equally out of the question; and I scarcely knew what had happened, when I saw myself crowded into a long cart, with my wretched companions; and a fellow endeavouring to pull off my coat, which he effected with a dexterity that showed me I was not the subject of his *coup-d'essai* in stripping people. He lost as little time in binding my arms with a cord; and, as this master of the ceremonies had assistants, the others were as quickly served in the same manner; and the cart moved off; the guards, which were very numerous, marching on either side of it, and thousands of the populace shouting and following in our train.

That I was terrified at all this, I shall not deny; but I protest, at the

same time, that my amazement was greater than my fears.

There are some accidents of a nature so strange and horrible as to induce a man to believe that they *cannot* happen to him; and of these, the idea that I should ever have my head cut off in Paris was one: at least I consoled myself with the notion of its impossibility as long as I could: a few minutes however put an end to this flattering delusion, and showed me that the thing was not only perfectly within the limits of possibility, but a great deal more than probable; indeed, that nothing, except my neck being of an indivisible texture, now could save me.

The fatal Place was in view, and the vista terminated by the guillotine dressed in all its terrors. Great as my con-

fusion was (and it must be admitted I was not confused without reason), I yet felt ashamed to appear dismayed when I observed the behaviour of my comrades: they retorted the cries of "*vive la liberté*," which rose on all sides from the myriads that surrounded us, and embraced each other with rapture; not one amongst them betraying the smallest symptom of cowardice that I could perceive, although I watched their faces, from a hope of discovering in them something to contradict my own sensations of despair, and assure me that we were any where but on the road to death. Alas! too certain was the reverse: our journey was finished, and the cart had stopped at the stairs of the scaffold.

Very little was wanting now to sa-

tisfy me that my days were numbered; my fate appeared inevitable, and I had nothing to do but submit. This being really my first time of acting the hero, it is not to be expected that I should have gone through the part without a slip or two: I admit that I had a slight singing in my ears; but I was tranquil; which I dare say passed on the spectators for calmness, when in fact it was the consequence of stupor: and I was silent, because I was absolutely unable to speak.

Whether vanity (which is said to be the last of our vices that forsakes us) would have carried me decently to the close, I cannot say; but I was nigh having the fairest opportunity imaginable of making the experiment, when the attention of the multitude, the guards, and

the prisoners was alike attracted by the approach of several on horse-back, who rode violently towards us, calling out to stop the execution; and the reviving words were repeated by ten thousand tongues. The foremost of these messengers of glad tidings was a magistrate, who, with sensibility that did credit to his feelings, wept with pleasure on finding that he was not too late.

He was followed by a number of general officers and their suites, at whose head rode the commandant of the national guard, and behind appeared parties of cannoneers and a battalion of infantry; while the vociferations of the rabble, who seemed to increase in number, were dreadfully mixed with the ringing of bells, the discharges of artillery, and the clangor of trumpets. This

was, in short, a day never to be forgotten in the annals of Paris, or in mine;—the memorable one which produced the downfal of Robespierre, gave security to the National Convention, and life to the son of the rector of Oakley. Somebody else, however, must write the memoirs of the French people, whilst I proceed with my own.

The condemned were liberated, by an order from the president of the Convention, who had issued directions for a general release of the prisoners confined by the faction of the Mountain, as it was termed; and our arms being unbound, we descended from the cart, amidst the plaudits and encouragements of those worthy folks who had come purposely to witness our sufferings, which would probably have afforded them as much

pleasure, though of a different kind, as they now seemed to have in our escape. For myself, I can declare with a safe conscience that I shared most fully in the satisfaction they expressed; and having resumed my jacket, and a fur cap I had worn since I had been taken at sea, I rushed into the thickest of the crowd, resolved not to amuse a French mob on a public stage any more—if I could help it; and indeed anxious to avoid such inquiries as might convict me of being a foreigner and a prisoner of war, by which I should, without a doubt, be again incarcerated;—a fate I had no inclination for; because, though not quite so bad as being beheaded, it is particularly irksome to one fond of breathing the fresh air.

This recreation I could not be said

to enjoy where I then was; and therefore elbowed my way as speedily as I could to get from amongst the throng. I succeeded in this attempt, though very weak from hunger and the agitation of my mind; and gaining the steps of an unfinished building, near which I did not perceive any person pass, I sat down to collect myself. I leaned my head against a pillar of the portico that rose above me, and had rested perhaps a quarter of an hour, when the report of a cannon, which I imagined close to my shoulder, made me start.

I instinctively ran up the steps, and then observing a ladder, left I suppose by workmen employed on the edifice, I climbed to the top, and saw myself at a height of above forty feet from the ground, and so situated, that, secure

from detection, I could command a survey of the square beneath, and many of the adjoining streets.

If saving such a life as mine can be thought fortunate, I may consider the discovery of this retreat just then as a very lucky one. To prevent any other person taking a similar advantage, I had sufficient presence of mind to draw up the ladder; a matter not effected without great labour; but at last I did get it up, and next proceeded to reconnoitre. But the spectacle which presented itself to me was beyond measure terrific, and would elsewhere, or in other times, have been as unexpected as it was frightful: here, on the contrary, commotions were hourly, and I was at no loss to comprehend the probable cause of the hideous disturbance below;

attributing it, and my conjecture was just, to a last and desperate effort of the partisans of anarchy.

The deposed and proscribed leaders of the Jacobin conspiracy, having assembled some troops still faithful to them, and an immense body of the lowest classes of the people, had attempted to make a stand in the vicinity of this square; but being overpowered, were at the moment of my looking down entering it, together with their pursuers, and falling in heaps all around. The affair was no longer a conflict, but a butchery; and multitudes were cut down, though disarmed. Some of the fugitives ran towards the building of which I was as yet the sole inmate; but being observed, were fired upon,

just as they reached it; and one of these was even on the uppermost step, when, struck by a ball, he fell dead in my sight.

The destruction of such as sought refuge here, was a lucky circumstance for me, though not for those who were defeated; for it induced others to direct their flight elsewhere, and saved me from the peril to which I must have been exposed had the victors followed them towards the place of my concealment: but they were otherwise employed, some in making prisoners, and some in pillaging the slain.

While all this was going forward, my consternation may be more easily conceived than described: I could not have made any defence against an ene-

my, nor entertain a hope of escaping by the swiftness of my legs, as I was so much weakened by long fasting that I was scarcely able to stand without supporting myself.

By degrees, quiet was restored in this quarter of the city; and so completely, that I believe I was soon almost its only living inhabitant: yet I want language to express the feeling of horror with which this observation inspired me: "a death-like silence and a dread repose" sat on every object around me; and a bright sun-shine, with gay and exhilarating beams, seemed to mock by its splendor the dismal scene beneath, which presented a vast area strewed with carcasses, and shops and palaces alike deserted and desolate.

In contrast with this partial tranquillity, came faintly on the breeze the pealing of the distant tocsin, and the frequent roar of an agitated populace.

CHAP. XV.

Will please those who like it.

HUNGER was now so pressing, that I had nearly decided on venturing down, though destitute of any means of appeasing my appetite, and almost certain of losing my life during such a period of confusion; but timidity, which I then called prudence, suggested a different plan, and determined me to remain where I was. A very extraordinary idea had occurred to me; and I foresaw such advantages from enduring my dis-

tress a few hours longer, as made the experiment worth a trial.

In contemplating the body of the unfortunate fellow who lay stretched below, the excellent condition of his dress, which was that of a gentleman, gave birth in my mind to a thought, that nothing but my desperate situation could excuse; and this was neither better nor worse than to wait until darkness shrouded me; then let myself down, investigate his pockets, and appropriate their contents, whatever they might prove, to my own use and behoof.

What the casuist will think of such a design, I do not know; nor does it much signify; but I recollect that when I conceived it, I was not thinking of morality, but of eating. The hope of success lent me resolution; I laid my-

self down; and between meditation, sleep, and occasionally moaning from impatience and pain, I passed the day as I intended; and I do not exaggerate in affirming, that, as it was near being the last, so was it decidedly one of the longest days of my life.

The sun, which I imagined would never set, at length sunk below the horizon; evening came, and finally the wished-for obscurity of night; and I doubt if during the whole time a single person had approached the spot. It remained silent as ever; and now, being assured of as much darkness as I could expect, and alarmed lest the rising of the moon should betray me, I got up, but with difficulty; and with incredible labour, and some fits of trembling, at

last lowered my ladder, and arrived softly and safe at the bottom.

Here my minutes were too precious to be wasted in scruples of delicacy, whether false or true: my prey had long been cold and stiff; there was therefore no doubt of his death, though there might be of my title to act as his residuary legatee!

I thrust my hand into one pocket; then into another: I searched them all, as I supposed;—but eagerness might have perplexed me; I tried them again and again, to no purpose—they were empty; and bitter and grievous was my disappointment! Yet once more I applied my hand to the dead man's person, and then, in passing it over his breast, I fancied that I touched some-

thing bulky on the inside of his waist-coat; I tore it open; and in a small pocket in the lining my quavering fingers lighted on some folds of paper and a leathern purse. These I instantly extracted, and, despairing of any thing more, and my terror of being found in such a situation increasing with each moment, I abandoned the deceased to the tomb which his untimely fate had provided for him, and descending the steps, moved as rapidly as I could across the square. On gaining the opposite side I obtained a prospect of a long street, and at the further end of it saw the glare of lamps and heard the rattling of carriages.

As yet I had not dared to examine my prize; but as this must be done, I advanced cautiously till I arrived

at a lofty arch-way over which a light was suspended; and producing the purse, found it was stuffed with small pieces of silver, and mixed with them six louis-d'ors. My joy was unbounded at the discovery: I replaced my wealth, and was quitting the gate-way, when a paper pasted against one of its sides caught my eye, and its contents, as I perused them, chilled me with their import. It was a decree of the Convention for arresting, as suspected persons, all who should be found abroad without sufficient passports; and until this moment I never adverted to the necessity of having or the impossibility of my procuring one!

But there are some people with whom good as well as ill fortune deals by wholesale, and here my protecting genius had exceeded my utmost wishes.

The stranger's papers might afford me such a certificate as would answer in some measure, and I unfolded them; when, by an accident on which I never could have calculated, they appeared to be a passport, and, as it was termed, a *ticket of surety*; and these not belonging to a Frenchman, but to an American of the name of Nehemiah Brown; and what is much more extraordinary, they could not have been made out for him from whom I took them; the particulars not at all corresponding with *his* person, but so perfectly with mine, as to astonish me greatly, and confirm me in the notion of their belonging to some poor seafaring man from the United States.

The owner was described as a citizen and mariner, dwelling in the fauxbourg St. Antoine (which implied his humble

circumstances); six feet in height; of a fair and ruddy complexion, with dark hair and eyes, and speaking French imperfectly.

I had therefore only not to fall into the hands of my friends who had so obligingly sent me to the guillotine after feeding me on chesnuts, and all was well. And my appetite now recommencing its expostulations with renewed violence, I darted forward, fearless and invigorated; and mixing with my fellow-creatures once more, soon got into one of the most populous and busy avenues; not far, as I afterwards perceived, from the Palais Royal: and the savoury steams of a cook's shop assailing me as I went along, I stopped and entered a magazine of eatables, resorted to, as I judged from the company then in it, mostly by me-

chanics. I delivered my request to the hostess, and sitting down, was readily supplied with what I asked for.

I do not however mean to insinuate that her alacrity in serving me was the result of pure benevolence, as I did not trust entirely to her philanthropy, but made sure of her partiality by an expedient which never fails: on ordering my dinner, I requested the favour of change for a piece of gold, which I put into her hand, and thus removed her apprehensions of my insolvency. She gave the necessary hint to the *gârçon*, who flew to obey me: and with the help of a large fricasee of rabbit, a couple of omlets, and a bottle of burgundy, I made ample amends to my stomach and jaws for the length of time they had been out of employment.

While thus occupied, I bestowed but little attention on the persons of the surrounding company; and they, I believe, as little on me; though some of them were soldiers,—a class of people with whom (as I had been somewhat cloyed already by their society) I did not wish to indulge in farther intimacy. I accordingly paid the charges, which were not immoderate, considering how few fragments remained after me; and then gratifying my Swiss attendant for his civility, made shift to inform him that I was at a loss for a good lodging, and particularly desired to be accommodated, if possible, in his neighbourhood.

Necessity can do its wonders as well as money: it helped me to language; and a gratuitous *livre* made the ragged

waiter an active friend. "If Monsieur the stranger," said he, "would condescend to sleep at the house of my poor old mother in this street, he should lie like a member of the Convention:"—he would have said a king, but at this period kings were not as well lodged as formerly. 'Moreover, though his mother sold herbs, and was indigent, she had a *belle chambre* for lodgers, and would be so happy to receive me, and to earn something towards her rent! and she was besides so honest, and such a good mother!'

Never was any thing so irresistible as this appeal; I closed directly with his proposal; and having obtained permission from his mistress, he begged leave to show me the way: "It is but a step," continued he; "*voyez vous*:" and knock-

ing at a low door, and exclaiming, "*c'est moi, ma mere!*" we were admitted by goody, who was barricadoed with *legumes*, water-melons, and baskets of my old acquaintances, the chesnuts; for all which she made many apologies, when she had heard from *Jean Jaques* the story of my wants, my complaisance, my riches, and my liberality.

Jean had said nothing but the truth in his recommendation of my apartment, or its owner. She was a picture of decent and beautiful old age; my room and bed were commodious, and the terms equally unobjectionable—a crown by the week. I would have given, I believe, four times the sum, rather than disappoint either my landlady or the affectionate creature her son: who, thanking me, returned to his occupation; and

left me to retire to my bed, which was in a parlour sufficiently large within the shop.

I hastened to enjoy the luxury of sleep, of which I stood greatly in want: but did not sink into forgetfulness until I had retraced the occurrences of the last two or three extraordinary days, with various sensations. My lot was now comparatively an enviable one; I had escaped from prison, from the axe, and from the cannon; had obtained, by a singular chance, money enough to preserve me from immediate necessity; and was in health, and secure from present danger. It was therefore not without reason that, instead of lamenting my fate, I fell asleep, repeating the well-known verses of Horace—

Si ventri bene est, si lateri, pedibusque tuis, nil
Divitiæ poterunt regales addere majus—

signifying, that if a man hath a dinner and a coat, and hath not the gout, he is as well off as a man can be.

I awoke, after a night of the calmest and most refreshing repose I had ever enjoyed; and collecting my scattered thoughts, began anew to revolve my situation; and to conjecture what the termination might be, and what chance I had of ever beholding England again. But the more I thought, the more was I perplexed; and indeed I saw that I was involved in as nice a dilemma as it was possible to conceive.

Should I continue to wander in a strange land, I must starve for want of subsistence as soon as my money was

expended; and if, with the hope of being ultimately exchanged as a prisoner of war, I confessed my name and country, I should inevitably be sent to some loathsome place of confinement, and remain, perhaps, for years without my liberty. But that magic word, as I pronounced it in my soliloquy, decided me; and I resolved to preserve my freedom, whatever hardships it might cost me. Besides, the vicissitudes I had already experienced had not only hardened both my body and mind, but had inspired me with a degree of contempt for the versatility of fortune, and an almost superstitious belief in the propriety of letting myself go whichever way the tempest pleased to drive me; making use of circumstances as they arose, but disregarding all regular plans.

With these notions were mingled some bitter and disheartening pangs; particularly from the remembrance of the lovely Miss Rivers, whom I could now expect to meet no more; and of my parents and friends, of whom it was impossible any intelligence could reach me where I was.

That the objects of my love, my filial affection, and my friendship, might have ceased to exist; or if living, must be counted unto me as dead; was a depressing and melancholy reflexion; and would in all likelihood have overwhelmed with despair one of a less elastic temperament, or who was destitute of my faith in the influence of the stars.

When it was time to rise, I dressed myself, and paid my compliments to the old lady, who had provided a bowl of

hot coffee and some white bread for my breakfast; and whilst I ate it, entertained me with the news, and her own sentiments upon the two simple subjects of politics and religion: and it is a pity that kings and cabinets cannot adjust these matters with as much facility as she did.

I interrupted her to ask where I could purchase some shirts of a coarse kind, and a few other articles necessary for one who wished to appear with decency in the streets: she gave me the proper directions; but informed me at the same time, that all the tailors in Paris could not assist me to compose a more fashionable dress than I had on; that if any thing I was rather too much of a *petit-maitre* for the mode, but that my being a foreigner would be some

excuse for my looking like a gentleman!

Could I have suspected my herb-merchant of a stroke of pleasantry, I should have concluded that she was sporting with my sorry habiliments, and using that figure of rhetoric whereby we speak one thing when we mean another; but there was in her countenance a singleness of soul, which rendered this supposition as absurd as her notion of a beau seemed to me; and I really could not help smiling when I heard the expression and surveyed myself. I had on me what the English soldiers call a shell, that is, a coat without skirts, of the most ordinary blue cloth; adorned with brass buttons, and in several places torn and soiled; a red waistcoat in a similar condition, and a pair of green-and-white

striped canvas trowsers; boots such as are usually worn by Dutch seamen; a check shirt; and a yellow silk handkerchief round my neck. I had not been shaved since the day before my arrival in the Gallic metropolis: and if the contour of my visage wanted any other embellishment, it had it in the cat-skin cap that I have already spoken of, which, along with my beard, caused my head to resemble more that of a famished hyæna than a man.

When, however, I stood at the door of my lodging, and observed the crowds as they passed, I began to comprehend the good dame's remark; for all who were not military, were precisely such tatterdemallions as myself. I was therefore completely in the costume of a *bon patriote*; and courageously walked out, to

search for a coffeehouse, and learn the state of public affairs from the prints of the day.

I soon gained the *Palais Egalité*, as it was then styled; and entering one of those many receptacles which are there thrown open to politicians, gamblers, bravoes, and idlers of every species, I acquired, from the newspapers, and the conversation of the declaimers in the coffeeroom, a knowledge of what had happened on the preceding day in the city; when it appeared that the faction of the Mountain had been utterly subdued, the leaders either slain or taken, and the safety of the Convention ensured; but that an alarm existed on account of the rebellion then raging in *La Vendée*, and that suspicions were entertained, by the guardians of the com-

monwealth, of machinations carried on in the capital by emissaries from England in the interest of the ex-princes; to counteract which strict orders had been given to arrest all British subjects found at large in any part of the republic, and a decree of instant death passed against the spies of Pitt.

Though I was no more a British spy than one of the royal race of Bourbon, I was very far from being easy when I made this discovery of the temper of the Gallic nation; not doubting that, if detected, summary justice would be done upon me: and this determined me to go abroad but seldom for some time; and at last, every other hope failing, to offer myself as an American wanting bread to serve in any of the battalions then in Paris;—a measure for which I

trust Heaven and my native land will pardon me, as being the effect, not of choice, but necessity.

Accordingly, after purchasing a couple of plain shirts, a pair or two of stockings, and a second-hand beaver hat, I retreated to my parlour, and, except a daily visit to the eating-house where I had first been entertained, I persevered in my resolution of secluding myself; employing my hours at home in recalling to memory the particulars of my past life; and in chatting, which I could now do fluently, with my loquacious but harmless and kind-hearted landlady.

Near three weeks had thus elapsed; my purse was, as I may say, gasping for breath; and my patience equally exhausted; when one afternoon, on returning according to custom from din-

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myself, and indeed I was considerably embarrassed by her intelligence, I must have been a villain to have exposed her to danger; so pretending an indifference I was far from feeling, I assured her I should abide the consequence of the next day's visit, and had no doubt of its being merely for the purpose of inspecting my passport.

Then, shutting myself into my room, and pulling off my clothes, I lay down, not to sleep, but to meditate. On many occasions this has been a practice of mine, and I have invariably found it an admirable resource. If I wished to compose, it was in my bed, and amidst the stillness of my chamber, that I could arrange my ideas with the greatest advantage. Had I a metaphysical theorem to examine, or a letter of moment

to write, it was there I found my reasoning powers clear and free from confusion; and if chagrined by disappointment, oppressed with sorrow, or wounded by the scorn and injustice of mankind, my bed has been my refuge. He who has one to retire to when pain and affliction assail him, is not perfectly a wretch; and—thrice happy is the man who, when in it, finds nothing there worse than himself!

I did not now harass my imagination with conjectures as to what might be the event of the next morning; but endeavoured to strengthen my mind against the approach of calamity, by repeating every maxim I could think of which the miserable have invented to keep one another in countenance: and the next day, when the expected hour arrived, I

was sufficiently prepared to meet all the evil thereof with becoming resignation.

The visitors were punctual in their attendance, and found me standing in the shop: they consisted of five persons; one of them a magistrate, another a military chieftain, and the rest private soldiers. The first, drawing a paper from his pocket, and throwing his eyes over it, addressed me: "Citizen, you are a single man?" I said I was. "Are you in good health?" I replied that I was in an exceedingly fine state of health, and hoped he enjoyed the same: he smiled; and the soldiers laughed aloud: "*C'est bon ça,*" said one; "*Qu'il est brave homme,*" said another. "Then, comrade," said the captain, "the nation is in want of patriots to bear arms in her defence, and I foresee that nothing can

flatter you more than being enrolled in my company: we have already marked down seven likely young fellows in this district; but you, when you get on your regimentals, and let your mustaches grow, will look better than any of them. —Measure the citizen-patriot," continued he, applying to one of his followers: and this ceremony was instantly performed, by means of a knotted cord which the other carried about him on purpose. "Enter his size in our book as fit for the front rank;"—"And an honour to it," said the soldier.

I then showed my passport, without expressing any reluctance to their kind proposals; and indeed they appeared predetermined to take no denial. The officer read it, and, giving it back to me, observed that my being a foreigner was

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opportunity of shedding blood, he had shown himself unmerciful;—though this with him was the effect of his sense of duty, rather than of a naturally inhuman character—at least I should suppose so, from observing that he could not refrain from tears at a pathetic tale; was very charitable when distress presented itself; loved fondling little children; and had all the deference and gallantry of a knight-errant for the softer sex.

Perverse enough, it may be said, that he, to whom the destruction of mankind and the creating of widows and orphans was both a trade and an amusement, should have known the throbs of a tender and compassionate heart! It is all very possible notwithstanding: and Captain Armand, though

a terror to his enemies, and, according to custom among the French, nick-named by his regiment *Le Diable Gris*, was idolized by every soldier in it; and a prime favourite with the women; whose sweet lips, as they ought, in society, give fame or infamy to a man's character. That of Armand was not high in their estimation without reason; he had twenty times volunteered on desperate occasions for their sons and husbands; and his body was marked with as many wounds as there are signs of the zodiac, engraved upon him by the swords and bayonets of his adversaries.

What with the general emulation to excel in arms which prevailed, and the new mode of discipline adopted by the republican leaders, a very short time

was enough to form the most untractable bumpkin into a soldier; and for my part, in less than a month from my joining the battalion, I was permitted to wear the uniform of the national troops, and to fall in with the others on parade; where, of course, I had an opportunity of improving my acquaintance with Captain Armand: the burden of fitting us for service was on his shoulders; and his attention to the advancement of the recruits was unremitting. His method, however, of showing the regard he professed to entertain for us, was not altogether the mildest or most conciliating. Of the only punishment for offences allowed by the laws, degradation and confinement, he was very sparing; but he made himself

amends for this clemency by abusing, swearing, and screaming at us; and nothing could be more ludicrous than the variety of his expletives, delivered in the accent of his province, and accompanied by the most violent contortions.

His manner was, neverthelss, efficacious: his capacity in every respect was far from despicable, and his military talents were transcendent; he therefore instructed us with surprising quickness and success; and we were in a state rather to do him credit than otherwise, when the opportunity he wished for presented itself.

Immediately after parade one evening, we received orders to march, with several battalions more, the next day;

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but, alas! the moments of a soldier's enjoyments are limited to two periods—his going forth, and (should it so be) his return: and no one would envy him, who knows how he passes the interim.

Our march was directed towards the north-west part of the country; and our movements were so rapid, that I can scarcely tell what occurred during the six days it continued; except that we passed through many villages and some towns; sung a great deal; drank a little *eau de vie;* slept less; ate hardly any thing; and were not sorry when commanded to pitch our tents on a range of hills upon the confines of *La Vendèe,* and within sight, and almost of cannon-shot, of Charette's army, encamped in the valley beneath, and apparently more numerous than ours.

Had their enterprising chieftain known as much as I did, he would not have allowed us the advantage of a night's rest, but would have fallen upon us when fatigued and dispirited; and probably have gained an easy victory.

On the contrary, we were unmolested for nearly two days; and the fourth had dawned, before we saw any thing like a decided commencement of hostilities on their side. This, unless in the mean time a negotiation had been set on foot, was an unpardonable error in the enemy; and I did not hear that any attempt had been made towards accommodation by the *Chouans'* leaders; though, on the part of the republican army, terms of peace were proposed, and rejected with disdain; our flags of truce

being hardly within the lines, when the opposite battalions began to move from their ground, and in all appearance to retreat before us.

It was now our turn to commit as great a fault as they had been guilty of: we were disposed into three columns, and, without any other artillery than a few light field-pieces, ordered immediately to follow them. We accordingly did so. Another day was lost in skirmishing with detached parties, and the column to which I happened to belong, separated completely from the others, was destined at last to bring the enemy to action on a wide and level plain, and within view of a small town, and of a forest called the Woods of *La Chaise*.

Battle, and its ordinary horrors, I had once before witnessed; but I was

now for the first time to see, and worse than that, to share in the ten-fold more direful horrors of civil war.

I shall dispatch as speedily as I can what I have to say on the terrible subject; and indeed should ask forgiveness of my readers for introducing it at all; but this incident being materially connected with my subsequent adventures, could not well be omitted.

At first we exercised ourselves in manœuvres on both sides; shortly after the affair grew more serious: a steady stream of fire ran from line to line on our part, and was answered in like manner by our adversaries; our fronts closing fast, and our flanks being already engaged with their bayonets.

The discipline, the valour, and the animosity of each, was equally conspicuous,

and the effects dreadful beyond expression. In the unnatural contest, fathers and their children, brother and brother, were opposed; youth forgot its courtesy for age; and the hand of friendship was extended—not in amity—but to slay!

To shrink now was impossible; for I could perceive that *Le Diable Gris* had his fiery eyes upon me; and the flash they seemed to emit, is the last thing of which I have any distinct image on my mind with respect to the scene then acting. Suddenly my hearing became dull, my eye-sight failed me, the sun withdrew its rays—and I sunk into oblivion.

My sensations were much the same when I was again capable of knowing that I had any: of silence, darkness, and piercing cold, I was for several minutes conscious; but of nothing more:

I raised my head, and acute pain brought back reason: I had dropped in what is called the *bed of honour*, and had remained there.

I suppose that three or four hours might have elapsed since my fall; and one more before I knew where I was. I felt my limbs stiff, and, doubtful whether or not I had received any fracture, cautiously attempted to rise; and succeeded: I next applied my hand to my head, at the side of which I thought my chief ailment lay, and discovered that I had bled, though not excessively; and had sustained no other injury than what arose from the grazing of a musket-ball just above my left ear, which had stunned me into insensibility, and thereby probably saved my life.

When I made this reflexion, I made

another also, which had never occurred to me before; namely, on the advantages of being forced into a battle, and shot in the head: but, by what right such a combination of blessings fell to my share, I own I cannot tell. No more than I could then where the hostile armies were, or what had been the event of the engagement.

Some of its fatal effects however I did perceive; although so dark that I could distinguish nothing particularly; but from the number of bodies near me, it was manifest that Death had been very busy; and having perhaps more to do than he was well able to manage, passed me by.

Under the idea that he might have served others in the same way, I grasped a sword that I accidentally set my

foot on, and proceeded from heap to heap; calling out as I advanced, in hopes of an answer from some wounded person; but I conclude that there were not any with the least remains of life near me; for neither a responsive voice, groan, or sigh, could I catch the sound of.

In this manner I had wandered for above half an hour, when I struck against the stem of a tree; and this reminding me of the wood, and town or village, I had seen in the morning, I was induced to go forward; in the expectation of either falling in with a party of my own troops, as I may style them, or else surrender myself to some one in the enemy's quarters, and claim protection as a prisoner of war.

Yet, at the same time, it was very

doubtful whether, in attempting this, I should not encounter a severer fate, and either be put to death as a deserter, or be butchered by the loyal peasantry as a republican.

These however were but chances; whereas, that I should be starved if I continued alone on the field or in the forest, was a certainty; and therefore I proceeded. But the trees were so thickly planted, their boughs and branches so long, and the brush-wood and briars at their feet in such abundance, that my labour was immense and my progress intolerably slow.

The intricacies in which I was involved at every step, were worse than those of Rosamond's Bower or the Labyrinth of Crete; and I having neither a clue of thread, nor a fond Ariadne

to guide me, my patience forsook me, and I resolved to go back, rather than persevere in such insupportable fatigue.

But to make resolutions is one thing, and to keep them another: it was so extremely dark that I could not ascertain on which side of this diabolical wood I had entered, and the attempt convinced me, that now "returning were as tedious as go o'er."

Accordingly I gave up that plan; and having rested myself for some time, commenced my toil once more with little better success.

But, as I have I believe elsewhere observed, Fortune was not in the habit of doing things for me by halves; and if I had to complain of obstructions thus far, that grievance was presently exchanged for one of the very opposite

kind: I no longer was incommoded by branches above or brambles below, but, stepping from between two trees, I found myself instantaneously, like the tomb of the Prophet, utterly independent both of heaven and earth, and fairly launched into the air.

Though I reached the ground in perfect safety, I was persuaded that I must have dropped from a vast height; and indeed, when at a future period I came to see the place from which I had taken flight, I was almost as much frightened as astonished.

I had fallen to a depth of more than forty feet from the edge of a perpendicular rock; and lighted unhurt in a meadow beneath it, luckily pitching upon a heap of hay.

My regimental hat was gone, but I

still held my sword in my hand; and was not sorry to find it there, as it might serve to make tolerable terms for me with any single antagonist whom chance should throw me in the way of.

CHAP. XVII.

Predicts all it foretels.

THIS new region, as far as I could discern, was as free from wood as the one I had quitted was encumbered with it; but it seemed to me bounded by I know not what of rocks or walls on every side, and these not very remote.

Whilst, like Satan at his arrival on the borders of Paradise, whom the poet compares to a thief or a prowling wolf, I stole on, pensive and slow, I thought I beheld a spark of fire fixed in one spot, and of a deeper glow than

those meteors which, like false friends, promise to assist, but in reality betray; and following the direction in which it appeared to shine, I at last totally lost it, and found myself treading a paved court, and approaching a building, the form of which I endeavoured to trace with my eye, but to little purpose: I could only discover, that, if not enlarged to my fancy by darkness and uncertainty, it was of prodigious size. As I walked on I also perceived that I ascended gradually, and was on a kind of causway leading to an arch, under which I entered upon the first step, as I judged it to be, of a flight of winding stairs; but the apprehension of a second aërial voyage rendered me very unwilling to go fast, or indeed to go at all.

I was, notwithstanding, tempted by

curiosity, and mounted still, though cautiously, until stopped by a low arched door studded with iron knobs, against which I pushed, without expecting it to open; but instead of resisting, it yielded readily to my hand; and passing on, I entered an apartment, as I found it to be by the aid of the moon, now visible through an opposite casement; and which by degrees afforded me a tolerably clear view of the place.

It was a sleeping-room; but it must have been about two hundred years since the lady or gentleman who occupied it had last got out of the bed, which stood in a corner, and was almost covered with the tapestry woven over it by innumerable spiders: and these industrious artists had also sup-

plied the injuries done by time to the hangings on the walls.

I looked from a ruined window, and saw that I was at the top, and in one wing, not only of a very high, but very great and antique castle: below me seemed something like an orchard or grove; and, by the noise it made, a running stream. To this mournful melody was added the hooting of an owl, and the sigh of the night wind.

By the time I turned round to take a second view of the room, every object was more distinct than before; and as I thrust my sword against different parts of the wall, a fragment fell withinside the arras, and, by the sound, seemed to roll down a wooden staircase. I pulled aside the tattered cloth, and the stairs

appeared, but so decayed as to make the descent hazardous. I ventured, however, and at length reached a spacious hall, with many high arched windows in it; at the further end, a flight of stone steps, and a folding-door above them. This I in vain attempted to open; but a small wicket in it gave way, and introduced me to the gallery of a chapel, not by any means so ruinous as the rest of the building. I went down into the body of it, and walked amongst the stalls, which were numerous, and some of them furnished with cushions of velvet; and in one of them I seated myself, as I supposed for the night; but had not rested more than a few minutes, when several voices at once struck upon my ear, and at the same instant lights appeared through the crevices of the

great door immediately under the gallery; to which I therefore determined directly to retreat, and, if danger was near, endeavour to escape by the way I had already explored.

Just as I had got again into the gallery, the doors beneath flew wide asunder, and admitted some men holding torches, which completely illuminated the lower part of the chapel, but rather added to the shade of that in which I was standing.

These visitors were followed by six others, bearing on their shoulders a small platform of boards, and on this extended a dead body, wrapped in a winding-sheet. With them came an old priest in his proper habit, whose countenance, to my great astonishment, was not perfectly strange to me, though I

was then too much engaged to recollect where I had ever seen him. The procession was closed by more than a dozen genteel-looking young men, with swords by their sides and plumes of feathers in their hats, and dressed in white uniforms richly laced; and over the shoulder of one of them hung a pink scarf.

This I knew to be the dress of those whom chance had the day before made my enemies; and I reflected, not without terror, on what might be the consequence to me, if discovered, at such a time, and in such a place, attired in the national colours.

I was in agonies, lest the stirring of a foot or a fit of coughing should betray me, when I might reasonably expect immediate death from their dis-

pleasure: and indeed my prospect of evading this fate, even if I had an opportunity of explaining myself, was but indifferent, as the best story I could tell must expose me to suspicion. Yet I thought it was in my power to make rather a plausible defence too, if permitted, because I had only lost my senses in the battle, and had preserved my certificates.

Whilst the ceremony of interment was going on, my fears were greatest; for after they had raised a flag-stone in the centre of the chapel-floor, and lowered the body into the vault which it covered, the priest repeated a short service, and the attendants kept silence; but occasionally their eyes wandered towards me, and then I almost fancied I felt their swords in my viscera.

When the solemn business was concluded, they began to converse; and I could gather from what they said, though they spoke very low, that the deceased had been a person whose place it would be both necessary and difficult to supply; and that the late engagement was a most bloody one, had lasted long, and terminated in the retreat of the republican troops.

There was here something contradictory, and which I could not reconcile. Who could this leader be, whom they thought it worth while to lay thus formally in consecrated earth, and yet not utter one word of personal regret for his fall? on the contrary, they neither said a syllable in his praise, nor even mentioned his name; their loss in him seeming to throw them into per-

plexity, but not to afflict them with the smallest sorrow.

After they had talked a little longer, they prepared to leave the chapel; but the first step taken for this purpose was an extraordinary one; for it consisted in the priest's producing a large key from his pocket, and with it securing the door by which they had come in. This being done, he walked along the aisle to the foot of the altar, the rest following; and there applying his hand to a spring on one side of a small door, it opened, the whole party withdrawing by this aperture, and the door closing as soon as the last had gone through.

I then began to breathe somewhat freely, and to wonder exceedingly at what I had seen and heard, as well as to

consider my own situation, and how I should act.

The more I indulged myself in conjecture, the more inexplicable was every thing. I once more left the gallery, again traversed the chapel, and at last resolved to follow, if possible, the road taken by these unaccountable persons in their exit, as soon as it was day; and then either give myself up to their mercy, or otherwise, as occasion might offer.

In the mean time something tempted me to endeavour and push back the spring of the little door, as the priest had done; and this I effected easily: it opened on much such another hall as I had found before; but instead of terminating in the same manner, great was my amazement on beholding,

through a large glazed door, many such figures as had already passed before my eyes, seated at a table on which stood dishes of meat and flasks of wine; and over their heads a lustre, which threw a brilliant glare of light on the company, composed entirely of men, and they chiefly to appearance military and a few ecclesiastics.

Festivity expands the human heart; and the scene inclined me strongly to make use of the opportunity, and present myself to them. I stole nearer, and observed them more accurately. Their arms of every kind were suspended against the walls of their refectory; not only cheerfulness, but mirth prevailed; and the dark hall in which I was standing echoed their laughter.

I counted not less than thirty indivi-

duals; and was rather encouraged than dismayed by their numbers, as their own strength would banish fear from their minds; and, amongst so many, my chance of meeting with some generous natures to interfere in my favour was the greater.

Yet, fear delayed my steps: and the strangest and most childish fancies bewildered me. Superstition has a thousand charms for the human being of sensibility and imagination; almost all, whether enlightened or barbarous, have at one period or other of their lives imbibed its notions; and in the strongest characters, its allurements continue though its terrors have ceased to operate.

This was strictly the case with me: I credited not the existence of the spec-

tre, and the witcheries of the sorcerer made me smile; but I have ever been fascinated, and I hope ever shall, with the creations of fancy, and delighted to stray over the regions of romance: nor have I ever beheld the august remains of Gothic magnificence, or stood upon the ocean's wide and lonely shore, without feeling a sort of wish for supernatural visitations, and regretting the restraints imposed by philosophy on our pleasures.

So powerfully was I now affected by what I looked at, that I doubt whether I should have been very much surprised had the vision suddenly vanished from my sight. But the gentry within were palpably corporeal, and things of this nether world; and indeed they ate and drank as if they were trying to make

the most of their time in this their earthly condition,

Just as I touched the transparent barrier which divided me from them, an action of theirs caused me a momentary alarm, and obliged me to pause. They filled their glasses, and rising with one accord from their seats, drank, in the English fashion, the health of the king; then sitting down, they sung a loyal anthem with great fervour and devotion; and I chose the moment of its conclusion for my attempt, which I commenced by knocking gently against a pane of glass with the guard of my sword. The effect of this noise on them was a minute of solemn silence, during which they all looked towards the place where I stood, and then on one another.

"What was that?" exclaimed one

nearest to me, and rising as he spoke: I trembled a little, but knocked again; and this decided him: he seized a pistol which hung behind him, and coming calmly up to the glass, asked who was there. I replied, "*Un malheureux*—a wretch, who throws himself on your clemency." At this response a loud laugh ran through the assembly, and the officer who had questioned me drew up a bolt, partly opened one side of the door, and desired me to advance; which I accordingly did. He shut it to again, and ordered me to come to the table, and tell, if I could, who I was and what had brought me there.

I answered him, that I was a republican soldier, without being a Frenchman, and had been compelled to take up arms because I was six feet high;

that being knocked down by a shot at the battle on the plains of La Chaise, the patriot army was so ill-bred as to go away without waiting until I got up again; and that, endeavouring to follow them, in the dark I had the happiness of falling from the top of a mountain, and thereby of finally getting into the adjoining hall, from which his goodness had allowed me to come and pay my respects to that honourable assembly.

I know not whether my odd expressions, or my foreign pronunciation, was the subject of their amusement; but I augured well of my reception from the fits of laughter that followed this speech, and which I thought would never end.

My exterior, it must be observed, was not very prepossessing: I had bound my neck-cloth round my wounded head;

my blue regimental coat was with dirt and gunpowder almost converted into a black one; and my white linen pantaloons were speckled with blood: add to this a ghastly pale face, and a long and shining sword in my hand.

Recollecting the military etiquette, I turned to the gentleman who had first addressed me, and begged permission to yield my weapon to him,—a mark of respect which I could perceive gave him and the rest a favourable impression of me. He politely restored it to me, and requested a repetition of what I had already told them. "Truth," says the Talmud, "standeth upon two legs, and a lie upon one." My story, which went upon three, must of course have got on pretty well: the acclamations were renewed when I had finished;

and the officer asked of what country I was a native. I said, of England; and the word had scarcely passed my lips, when it was graciously repeated by every one within hearing, and particularly by some person, whom I could not clearly distinguish, but who presently made his way up to me, and with the voice of agitation and doubt asked me if I knew him not; and I then remembered the countenance, not only of the priest I had seen officiate in the chapel, but where I had known it before; for it was no other than that of my fellow-prisoner in the church at Paris, the venerable Marbœuf; who having shed tears for my death on seeing me conducted to execution, would hardly for some minutes be persuaded that I was the person who had shared his bed of straw

in captivity! At length he became assured, embraced me affectionately, and told the anecdote aloud.

This was such a testimony of my veracity as at once put an end to their suspicions, if any they entertained, and established my claim to their protection and hospitality. I was invited to sit, and share their supper, and their wine, which was excellent; and in return for their kindness, thinking myself obliged to throw aside all reserve, and making apologies for my imperfect delivery, requested they would listen to a candid account of myself.

The proposal was accepted with eagerness; my story gained universal attention; and if violent laughing at parts of it be a sign of approbation, I had no reason to be dissatisfied.

I was still further pleased by observing, that, on their discovering me to be above the rank of a plebeian, their prejudices as men of noble extraction, which doubtless most of them were, acted on their feelings to my advantage. I was caressed by every one as a persecuted gentleman, and the subject of a nation friendly to their cause; and received the most solemn and liberal assurances of support and encouragement from all descriptions of associated royalists, while they retained the power of protecting others, and kept possession of the district in which they had agreed to make their last stand for the house of Bourbon. And this they said they had every reason to hope would be a prosperous attempt; especially from the event of the recent engagement, which,

by, the declarations of all, was in the highest degree fortunate for them and fatal to their opponents.

From *Pere Raymond*, as they called Marbœuf, next to whom I was seated, I learned that the day of my intended execution had been that of his freedom; the moderate party having thrown open the prison doors; but as they could not afford him, being a refractory priest, any other assistance, he had undergone various persecutions, and at last effected his escape, with some of the royalists, into La Vendée, which had of late been the asylum of all belonging to that party who could contrive to get there.

He also informed me, that, as masters of the sea-coast in their neighbourhood, they had occasional communications with their friends in England, and

were in daily expectation of a supply of men and arms from thence.

I then questioned him as to the general mode of life of himself and his associates; and found that it was in most respects far from being uncomfortable; that they were surrounded by towns and villages in their interest; that the climate was delightful, the soil abundantly productive, and the peasantry a race of ignorant, but courteous, innocent, and religious poor people. For himself, he said he experienced much respect and kindness from the military, who had sheltered him and several of his order, and given them apartments in the Castle of Beauvoir, the name of the place we were in, and which was of such vast dimensions as, if requisite,

to contain a garrison of many hundred soldiers.

"To-night," he continued, "you shall share my room; and to-morrow we can go together over as much of the château as remains in repair, and I doubt not find you a commodious dormitory. As to your victuals, be under no concern on that head; we are furnished with more than we can use by the generosity of the inhabitants; who, knowing that their best hopes of enjoying liberty of worship, and of being rescued from the dominion of those who have usurped the government, depend upon the success of our arms, think they cannot do too much to promote the great object."

I here filled my glass, and signified

my wish, according to the fashion of my country, of drinking to their prosperity; thanking them all at the same time for their civility to me, and declaring that I had now nothing to regret, except my inability to make them any return, unless by employing my sword in their service, which I requested them to consider in future as at their command.

This speech was received with general applause; and a tall cavalier, who seemed the chief military man amongst them, and presided in a large old oak chair at the head of the table, having conferred with some others near him, said to me; "We have a plan, Mr. Englishman, for making you very serviceable, which shall be communicated to you to-morrow. You shall be perfectly free to make any objections you

please to our scheme, and, if you think proper, to refuse joining us in it, without any offence to us. In the mean time, let us break up and go to rest; but first, this gentleman," pointing to a young man at the table, "will examine your hurt, and you cannot be in better hands."

With him accordingly, and *le Pere Raymond*, I retired; the others rising when we did; and the younger ones, agreeably to military rules, when servants are not to be had, securing the wine, and extinguishing such of the lights as we did not carry with us; though almost every man, as we filed off, held a taper in one hand and a weapon in the other: and in this order of procession, taking our course through a door-way which I had not before ob-

served, we came into a square court with a corridor on every side, and beneath this, several entrances into different chambers. The place, though more extensive, reminded me of the ancient part of Magdalen College at Oxford, where the cloisters form the most truly collegiate scene to be found in that beautiful university.

Here we separated; my friends and I ascending by stone steps a narrow and winding passage, and arriving at last at M. Marbœuf's cell; where the surgeon took off the bandage from my head; and on inspecting the wound, assured me it was trivial, washed it with wine, and, binding it up scientifically, left me to the care of my old acquaintance; who dividing his bed-clothes with me now, as he had once done his allowance

of straw, made a very tolerable bed for me upon the oaken floor of his apartment, on which I thankfully lay down, and slept soundly till morning.

CHAP. XVIII.

In which may be seen all that is contained in it.

When I awoke, my silver-headed comrade was a subject for a painter. He was on his knees, in a long black robe, at an open casement; and with extended hands, and his eyes fixed on the dawning clouds of an autumn day, breathing low the gratitude of a harmless and well-regulated heart to the Parent of Good: while the refreshing breeze, passing through festoons of natural flowers that overhung the window,

wafted with it the odour of the wall-flower and the honey-suckle.

On looking out, I saw that it was not without reason praises had been bestowed, by many with whom I had conversed, on the picturesque beauties of this part of France: nor could the richest fancy conceive imagery to equal, much less to exceed, the fair scene that was now spread before me: verdant valleys, laced as it were with silver streams; the gilded spires of distant towns; the blue smoke of the village or lowly cottage, ascending undisturbed, like accepted incense, to Heaven; a wide-extended forest, tinted with the thousand colours in which this charming season of the year dresses the woods so beautifully; the remote expanse of ocean; and the canopy of purple and gold above, com-

posed altogether a show surpassing any thing I had ever beheld.

In a short time we were summoned by beat of drum, to breakfast, in the hall where I had met the assembly the preceding night, and where I now had a more perfect view of the company to whom I had in some measure sworn allegiance.

They were most of them young men, formerly possessed of titles of nobility and plentiful estates; but who had now no other rank or property than what their swords might win them. Fugitives, and proscribed even in the bosom of their native land, they were leagued together by a similarity of fortunes and political attachments; and had vowed to restore the throne to its lustre and

the altar to its sanctity, or perish under the ruins of both.

The army of which they made a part, consisted of many thousands of the peasantry, officered by such as they had chosen from the most experienced of those gentlemen who had put themselves forward in this bold enterprise; and countenanced, at the same time, by having in their ranks, and serving as private soldiers, multitudes of the younger sons and relatives of their expatriated lords.

In such a force, and so organised, enthusiasm and valour; ignorance, and a laudable pride; discipline, and a spirit of disorder, were necessarily combined; and the result was, that in battle they were sometimes victorious, but

more frequently overthrown: and what was most to be lamented, in success, as well as in defeat, the blood of their most resolute and ablest leaders was shed in the greatest abundance; so that paying thus dearly even for the advantages they gained, they were gradually exhausted; and finally compelled into submission.

This observation, however, is derived from a knowledge of what occurred long after the time of my acquaintance with the gallant insurgents of La Vendée; for during my connexion with them they were invigorated by hope, and triumphed in prosperity; and were accustomed to assert, what many are inclined to believe, that had they then been heartily supported by any of the European states at war with the repub-

fic, the event of their efforts would have been very different from what it ultimately proved.

At the period I am speaking of, their courage had been raised to the highest pitch by promises of aid from Great Britain, whose influence, as a naval and military power, they expected would have turned the balance in their favour; and to their joy on receiving this assurance was added the triumph of a decisive victory obtained by their arms in the engagement already mentioned.

On this occasion they confessed to me that they had suffered severely; and the principal person, who addressed me before, now said to me, the rest surrounding him as he spoke; "Amidst our losses, you will be surprised, sir, to hear, that he whom we most regret, and

who fell by a mere accident, was nei. an officer, a gentleman of rank, or one on whom we could at all rely, either for enterprise or counsel; and it is precisely on this point we wish to consult you, and hope for your concurrence in what I am desired to propose. You must understand, that a belief has existed for some months, and has been most salutary in its consequences to us, of a prince of the royal blood of France being in arms, and actually amongst us. On discovering that this error prevailed universally, we came to a determination of cherishing it by every possible method; and this we effected by the stratagem of procuring a stranger from a distant quarter, and totally unknown here, to personate the royal hero: we

appointed the Castle of Beauvoir for his residence; permitted him as seldom as we could to be seen by the soldiers or common people, and but occasionally allowed him to follow his inclination in attending us to the field; and then took care to make him ride swiftly along from rank to rank, encircled by a body of officers as his guards: so that it may be said he was, though shown to the people, never absolutely seen by any of them.

"He was always, when in public, dressed remarkably, and well mounted; and the moment his troop, carrying the embroidered banner, appeared, loyal airs were played by the regimental music; and the shouts of the soldiers, and of the rustic inhabitants of these vales,

evinced his popularity, and gave our cause an importance it otherwise must have wanted.

"Yesterday, in the confusion of the charge, in which you were wounded, a shot unaccountably reached him, though at a great distance from the spot where the action was warmest, and he died in his saddle; but we carried him off, unobserved by all except those immediately about him; and last night, as you witnessed, buried him in the chapel of the neighbouring abbey. Is it, generous foreigner, too much to ask you to support the laudable deceit we have hitherto practised? In size and complexion you resemble him we have lost; we shall take better care of you than to expose you to danger; and indeed, this campaign but once over as happily as it has begun, our

hazards and fatigues will be at an end, and a cincture of laurel be ready for your brow." Then, smiling archly, he reminded me of my former princely title, and sudden degradation; which renewed the laugh before raised by the relation of that adventure; and caused me, though my resolution was already taken, to affect a solemn air in giving my consent. But my gravity entirely forsook me when I perceived the delight which my acquiescence gave them, and their raptures on my requesting to be immediately arrayed in the garments of my predecessor; a suit of which was forthwith produced, and put on me.

It consisted of a coat and waistcoat made of green satin, embroidered with gold; plenty of which also embellished my pantaloons of rose-coloured silk;

and my hussar boots were bound and tasseled with the same glittering substance. Across my shoulders was laid a richly ornamented scarf; my hat was turned up in front, and graced with a plume of white feathers; and a sheath being found for my sword, which was in itself of the finest temper, and the hilt of solid plate, it was formally girded on, after being blessed by the general, as he was styled,—father Marbœuf refusing to sanction the mockery; and thus accoutred, I strutted before them all, like another Perkin Warbeck; not without a sense of satisfaction, though I was at least as much astonished as pleased at the *outré* figure I made, and the singular coincidences by which I had attained to the dignity conferred on me.

This much, however, I will say, for

my share in the usurpation: I had laid no plots to ensure its success; my conscience made me no reproaches; my grandeur was as likely to last as that of many potentates then in Christendom; and had I been *bona fide* a prince, I could not have been less an object of envy.

If I did not supply my companions with a subject for their jealousy, I did for their merriment. They had been, I understood, quite in despair at the fall of him who had so opportunely made room for me; and their hilarity on being thus unexpectedly provided with a substitute, was in proportion extravagant. That is to say, it appeared so to me; because, although somewhat accustomed to the gaiety of the national character, I did not know it thoroughly:

when longer resident amongst them, I should have been as much amazed at their being either sober or serious for five minutes, on any account whatever.

Their volatility was incredible: they made songs, puns, and epigrams on their own calamities; went out to skirmishes day after day with detached parties of the enemy, with as great cheerfulness and disorder as I have seen so many fox-hunters set forth in England to pursue their pleasure: and in the evening, while they sighed over the names of such of their number as were left behind, never more to return, they called them brave unlucky devils, and told some ludicrous anecdote of each. And I have seen them in the agonies of amputation, and more frequently in the moment of death, exhibit all the polite

ness of the courtier, accompanied by hardihood, and a disdain of complaint that would have done honour to a Grecian sage or an American warrior.

Count de B——, the general who commanded our garrison at the Castle, was the least loquacious and most solid character amongst them; and a man for whom I entertained a very sincere esteem. Indeed, this sentiment for him was universal: it was impossible not to admire him, even in his failings; which, as it sometimes, though rarely, happens, he had the art of giving such a turn to, as made them seem but foibles that he affected in order to come down to the level of others, and save their pride from mortification. His person was handsome; his manners very insinuating; and his courage so established,

that as there was no danger of which he was afraid, so there was hardly any to which he could not have led the gentlemen and soldiers under him: they called him in fondness their *Bayard*, and swore that he deserved the eulogium pronounced upon that valiant knight, of being *sans peur, et sans reproche;* and that could four such generals be found, they would rule the world!

He treated every duty, however arduous, as a trifle to be executed without trouble: when exposed to the enemy's fire, he was observed to be as cool as if seated in a drawing-room; and if it fell to his lot to cover a retreat, he invariably took such measures as checked the pursuit and saved his people. A few such men as De B. to lead the royalist troops, if properly assisted,

would at least have ensured them honourable terms from their conquerors.

Upon my interrogating him as to the chance of our secret respecting myself being discovered, from the numbers already acquainted with it, he replied, that they were too much interested to disclose the fact, where it could do harm to have it known; and that even if they should, the peasantry would not believe any thing so contrary to their own wishes; but would be confirmed in supposing me a person of distinction, when they saw me invested in gorgeous apparel, and treated with suitable attention.

I next ventured to stipulate for permission to wear a plain dress as often as possible; and to be indulged with the freedom of taking exercise, when I could

do it with propriety. At this he and his suite laughed furiously: "I sympathize," said he, "too much with you, in the misery of being always a great man, not to release you whenever we can spare you."

I was then shown what was to be my future apartment, and where there was every necessary article of furniture. It was lighted by a window large enough for the east-end of a cathedral; and a part of my princely *devoirs* was to consist in now and then, standing, full dressed, at this, and allowing my august person to be seen at a distance by such as pleased to gratify their curiosity with a peep at my royal highness; and to salute them with condescension, when the multitude, as they frequently did, paid me the compliment of their

huzzas. After this ceremony, I was to mount my steed, and, attended by several field-officers, who rode on all sides of me, to gallop for four or five miles in different directions through the district; and, when it could be done with safety, alight, enter the mansion of some farmer, and accept a draught of wine, or other refreshment; preserving constantly, however, a solemn and haughty carriage, and speaking but seldom, for fear of not being thought a great man. And during these excursions, on many of which I went, I succeeded miraculously, and was followed with praises and blessings; nor was there, I believe, a doubt entertained of my legitimacy. My vicious language, when I condescended to speak a sentence, passed for refined pronunciation; my stiffness,

for the loftiness inherent in high-born souls; and my features proclaimed nothing but magnanimity, wit, and kingly dignity: such is the magic influence of rank on ordinary beings!

For several weeks I was exhibited every third or fourth day in the above-mentioned manner; and proved, I believe, in some degree as useful an instrument in the hands of those to whom I was subordinate, as princes generally do.

I served to keep their friends together, if not to attract others to our standard; and when not employed in my painful business of personating greatness, I took frequent opportunities of putting on an English sailor's dress, which I obtained from our stores; and in these habiliments strayed, both by

night and day, into the neighbouring town of Challans, and amongst the hamlets on the sea-coast; passing with the inhabitants, for what in reality I was, an Englishman escaped from a republican prison, and, which was not less true, watching for means of returning safely to my own country.

I was consequently well known in these places, and treated with kindness and familiarity.

They denominated me *Jacque*, which they thought a good English appellation; and freely spoke their sentiments in my hearing, concealing neither their hopes nor fears; by which I acquired intelligence for my friends at the Castle, and frequently excited their risibility by making my reports at our nightly meetings, when they were excessively

amused by my dexterous performance of three distinct parts on the same day.

As winter approached, we were in hopes of not only continuing safe from any attacks, but even of gathering such strength as would render us more formidable than ever against the spring campaign; and in fact, though not free from temporary alarms, we did remain almost unmolested, until the latter end of November; and then whatever vexation we suffered arose rather from the inclemency of the season than the enemy.

To the inconveniencies produced by tempestuous weather was added a considerable share of disappointment in not receiving our expected succours from England; as from her we counted upon a supply of grain, arms, and ammunition; all of which we greatly wanted.

A regular guard had been for a long time stationed in a very high watch-tower close to the sea, the waves of which beat against its base; and orders had been given to communicate the news to the garrison as soon as ever any sail should be observed steering towards the main land, or the adjacent islands. One officer or another usually had the command of this party of observation; and, by my own request, I was sometimes his companion in the tower, at the top of which there was a small apartment where we kept lights burning at night, and watched by turns.

END OF VOL. II.

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